Saskatchewan
Executive
Council

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Omnibus
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

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Regina, Saskatchewan
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February 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Federal issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, federal taxes, agriculture and the economy.

- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include agriculture, health care, provincial taxes, and the provincial economy.

- The vast majority of residents approve of changes the government is making to the justice system, including the way the government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program", targeted funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department, and the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes.

- More than two thirds of residents think the education system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of Saskatchewan's elementary and secondary education is adequate or better.

- The majority of residents think high school students are prepared for entering post-secondary institutions; more than one third think high school students are prepared for entering the workforce.

- The majority think the post-secondary education and skills training system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs is adequate or better.

- The majority of residents think an income tax reduction would benefit their family and would be most effective in promoting fairness for all taxpayers.

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents would be in favour of paying sales tax on more items if income taxes were reduced to the point that they and their family had a net tax savings and would be better off overall.

METHODOLOGY

Anderson/Fast & Associates was retained by the Government of Saskatchewan to conduct the February 2000 public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The February Omnibus Survey contains questions designed to explore public opinion regarding:

- federal issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- provincial issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- the justice system;
- education;
- post-secondary education and skills training; and
- provincial taxes.

The questions for the survey were provided by Saskatchewan Executive Council and assembled into an interview format by Anderson/Fast. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 1,000 households throughout Saskatchewan. To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

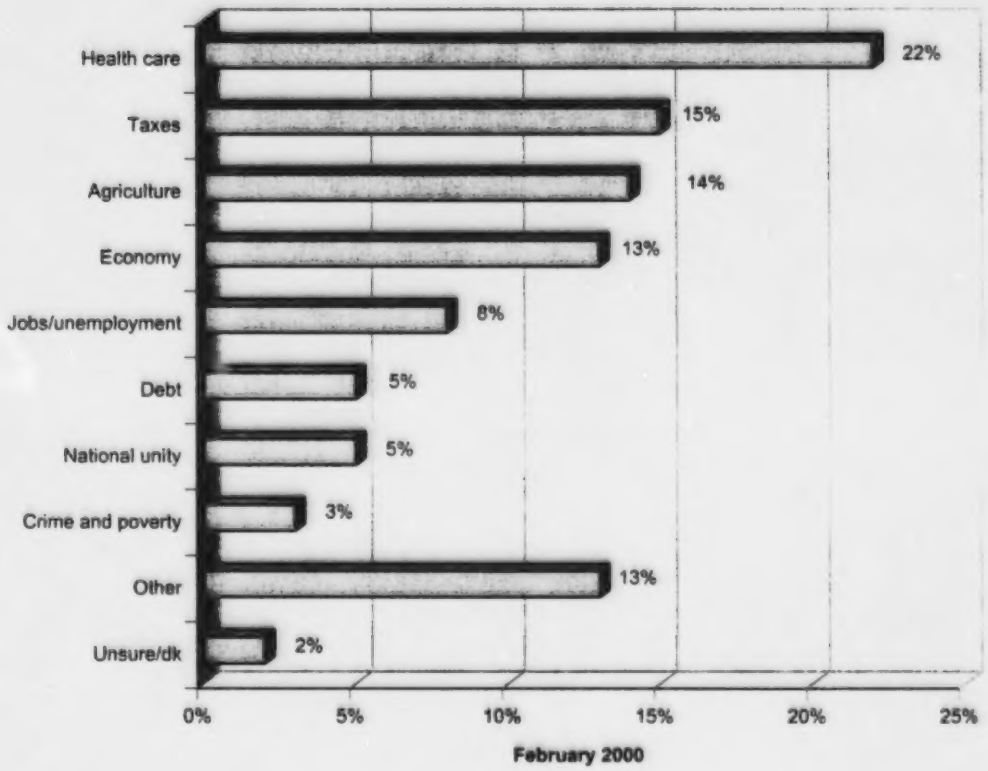
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed over a nine day period between Monday, February 7 and Tuesday, February 15, 2000. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Anderson/Fast's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

The Omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points: reliable results with low variability. Frequency charts for all public opinion issues are illustrated in this report.

Anderson/Fast designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. We also conducted statistical tests on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

1.0 General Issues

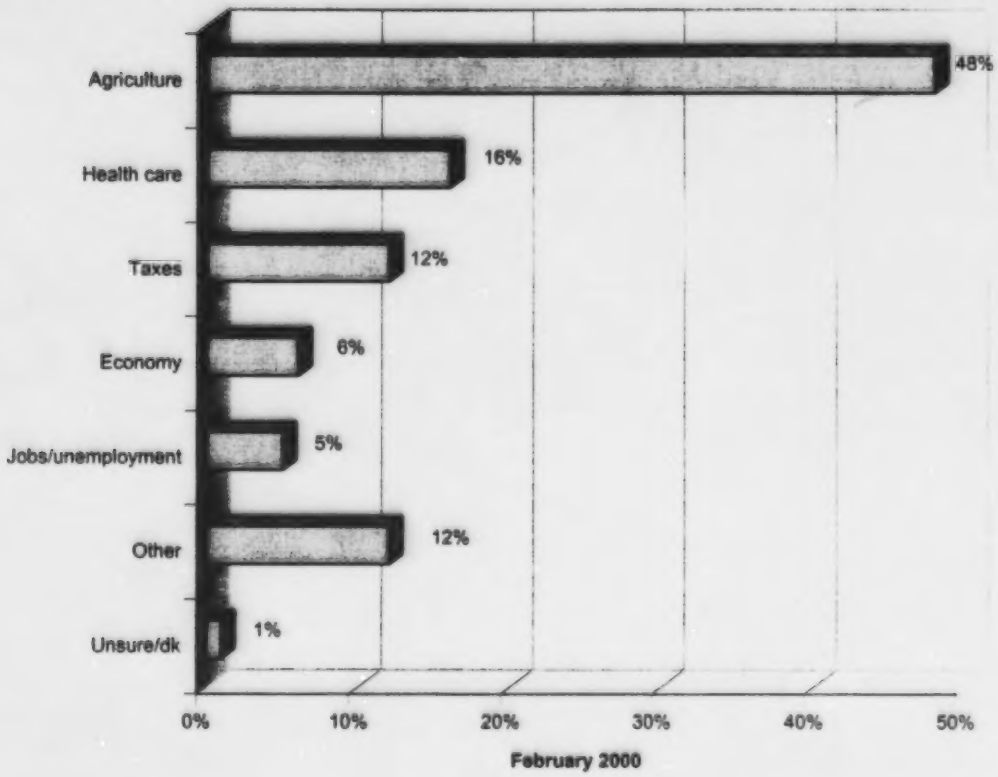
Question 1. In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Canada today?



- According to 22% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include federal taxes (15%), agriculture (14%), the economy (13%), jobs and unemployment (8%), national deficit and accumulated debt (5%), national unity (5%), and crime and poverty (3%).

- Approximately 13% of respondents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (4%), moral, social and religious issues (2%), education (1%) and government cutbacks and spending (1%).

Question 2. What do you think is the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today?

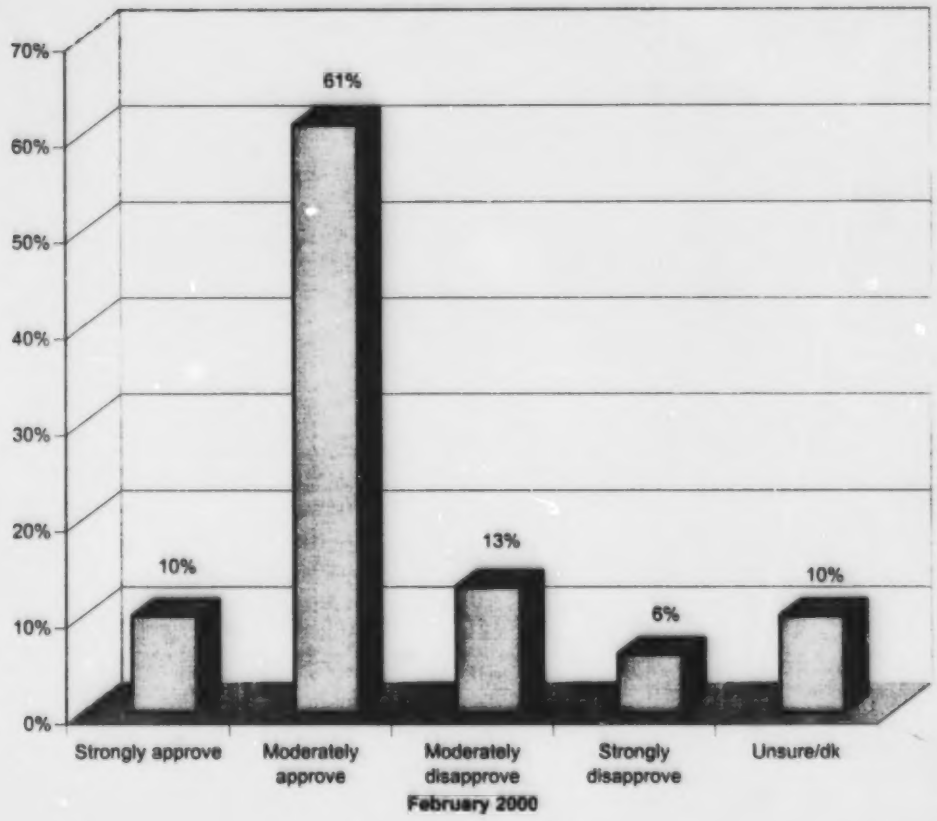


- The most important issue facing the province today, according to 48% of Saskatchewan residents, is agriculture. Approximately 16% of residents are concerned primarily with health care, 12% with taxes, 6% the provincial economy and 5% jobs and unemployment.

- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 12% of respondents are population loss (2%), the accumulated provincial debt (2%), the provincial government in general (2%), Native issues (1%) and education (1%).

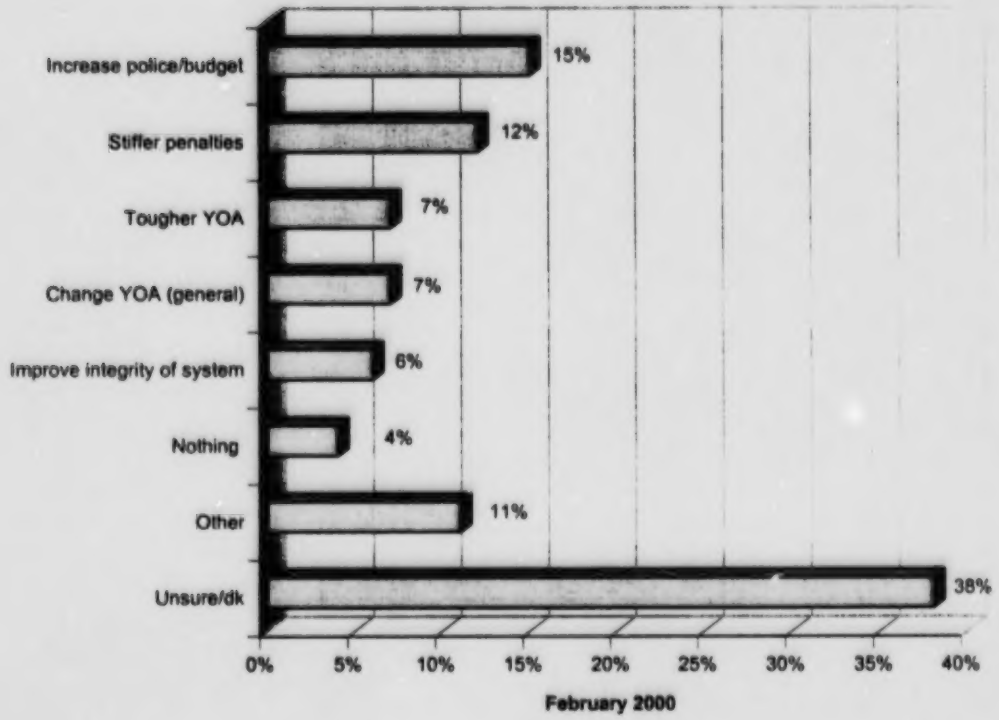
2.0 JUSTICE

Question 3. Generally speaking, do you strongly approve, moderately approve, moderately disapprove or strongly disapprove of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities?



- The majority (71%) of Saskatchewan residents approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities.

Question 4. What would you like to see changed about the way Saskatchewan's government manages policing and the justice system?

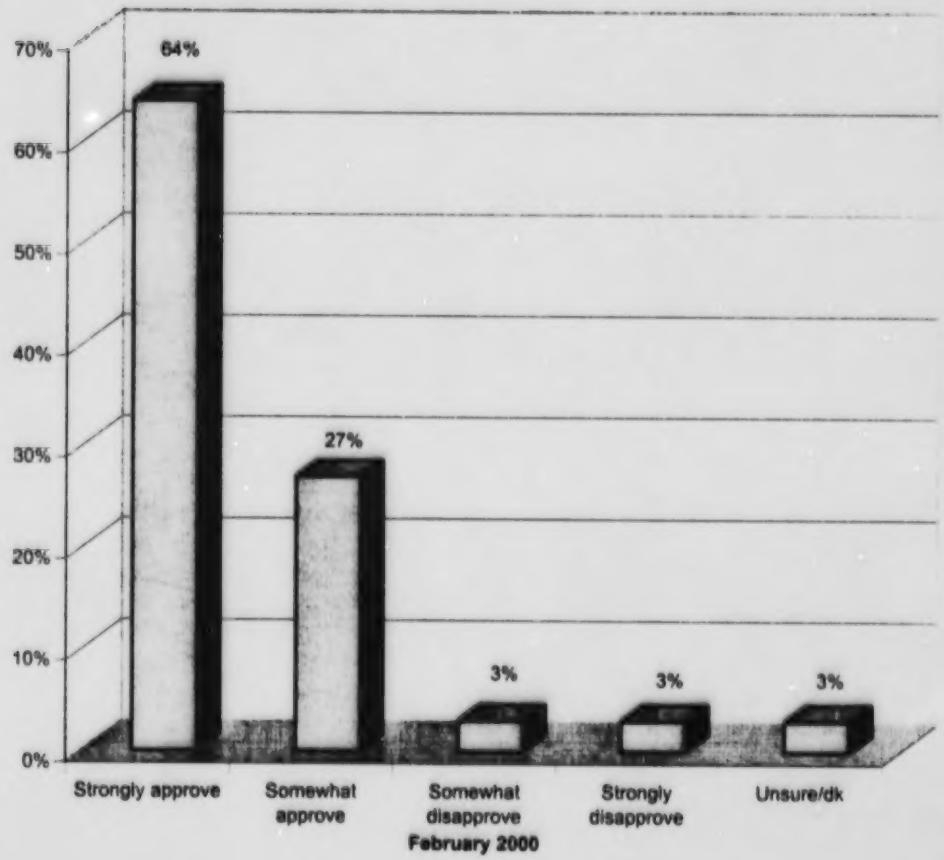


- Approximately 15% of Saskatchewan residents would like the government to increase the budget in order to hire more police and 12% would like stiffer penalties for offenders. About 7% would like to see the Young Offenders Act toughened with stronger penalties for young offenders, another 7% mention changes to the Young Offenders Act in general and 6% mention improving the integrity of the justice system.

- About 11% of respondents mention 'other' changes they would like to see in the justice system, such as increase social programs (2%), increase legal aid funding (2%) and treat victims more fairly (1%).

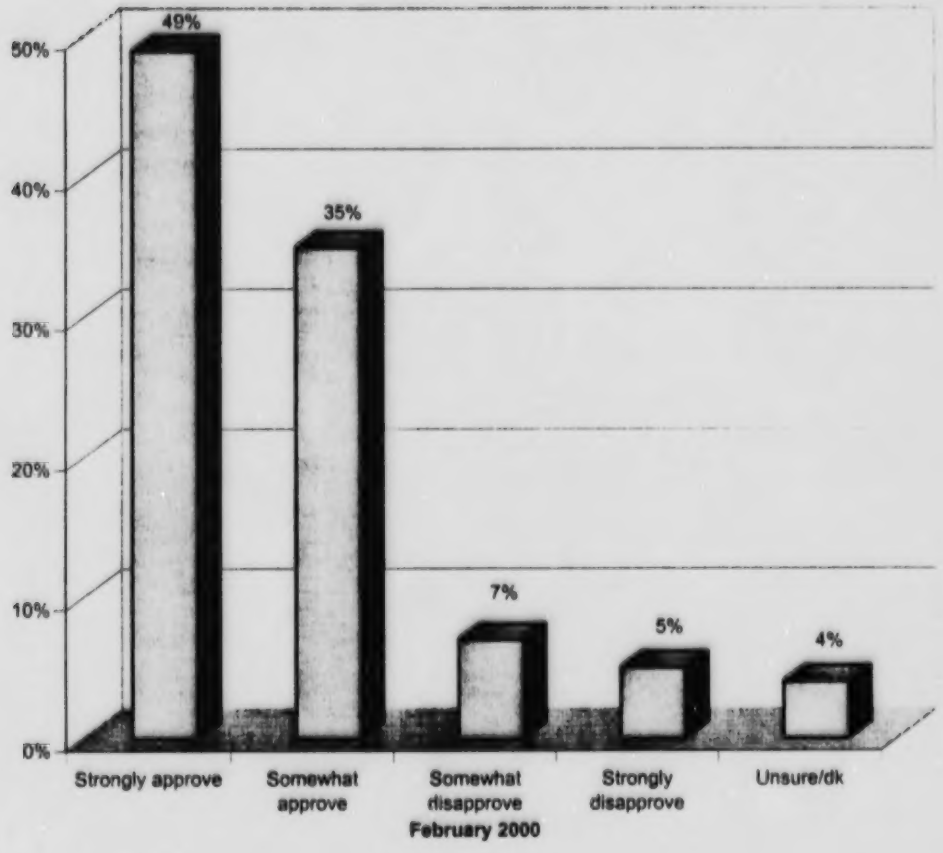
I am going to outline some of the changes the government is making to the justice system. I'd like you to tell me if you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the following initiatives:

Question 5a. The government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program". It's a partnership between police and prosecutors aimed at identifying the minority of young offenders who commit most of the crimes, tracking them, and getting them off the streets.



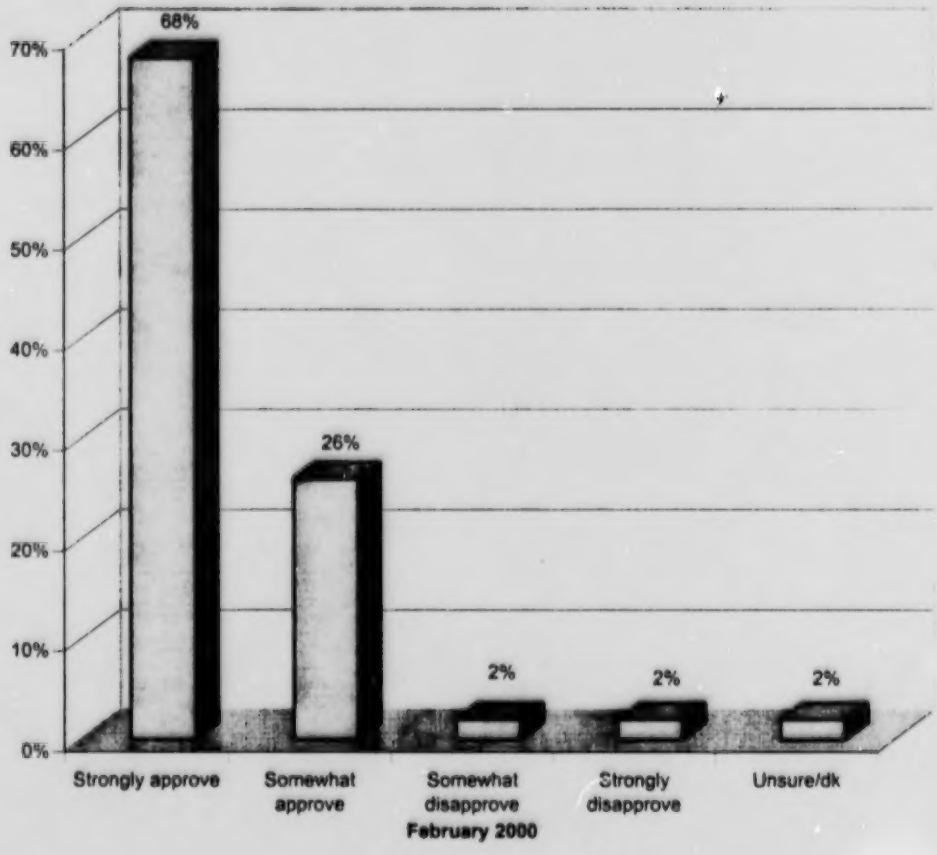
- The vast majority (91%) of residents approve of targeting funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program".

Question 5b. The government has targeted funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department by hiring more prosecutors and support staff so that trials take place more quickly, and prosecutors have more time to work on individual cases.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (84%) approve of targeting funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice system by hiring more prosecutors and support staff.

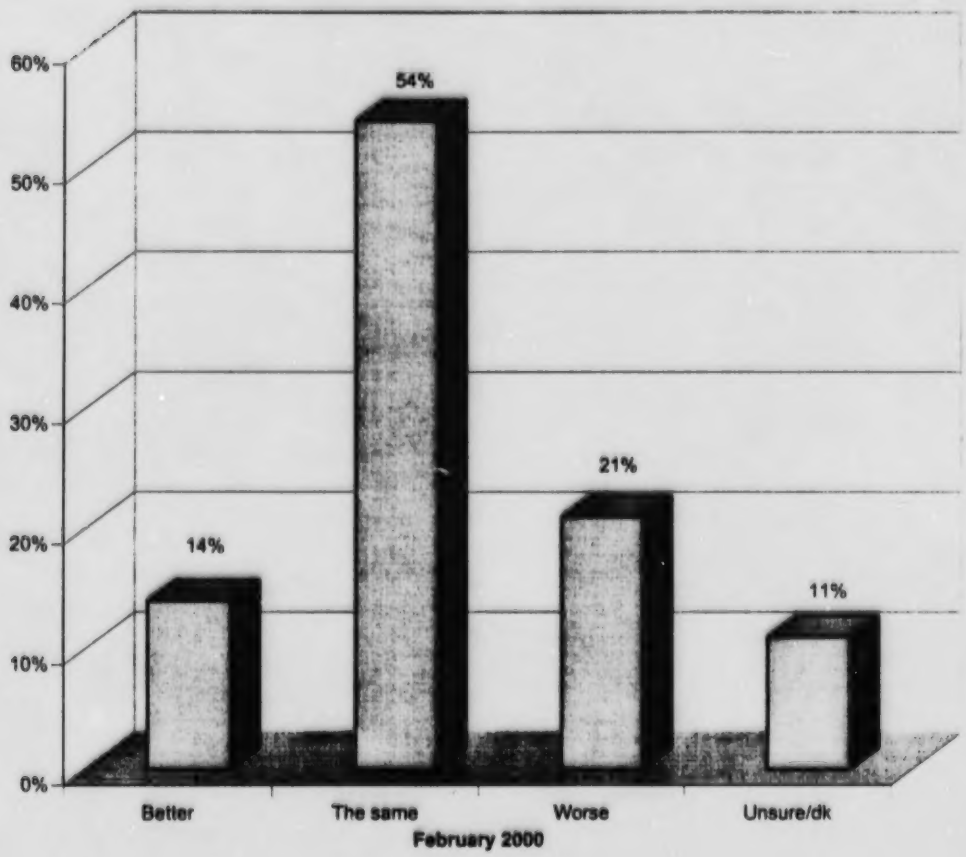
Question 5c. The government has launched a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography, and money laundering committed by organized groups like motorcycle gangs. The task force brings together the RCMP, city police forces, and a special prosecution team.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (94%) approve of the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography and money laundering by organized groups.

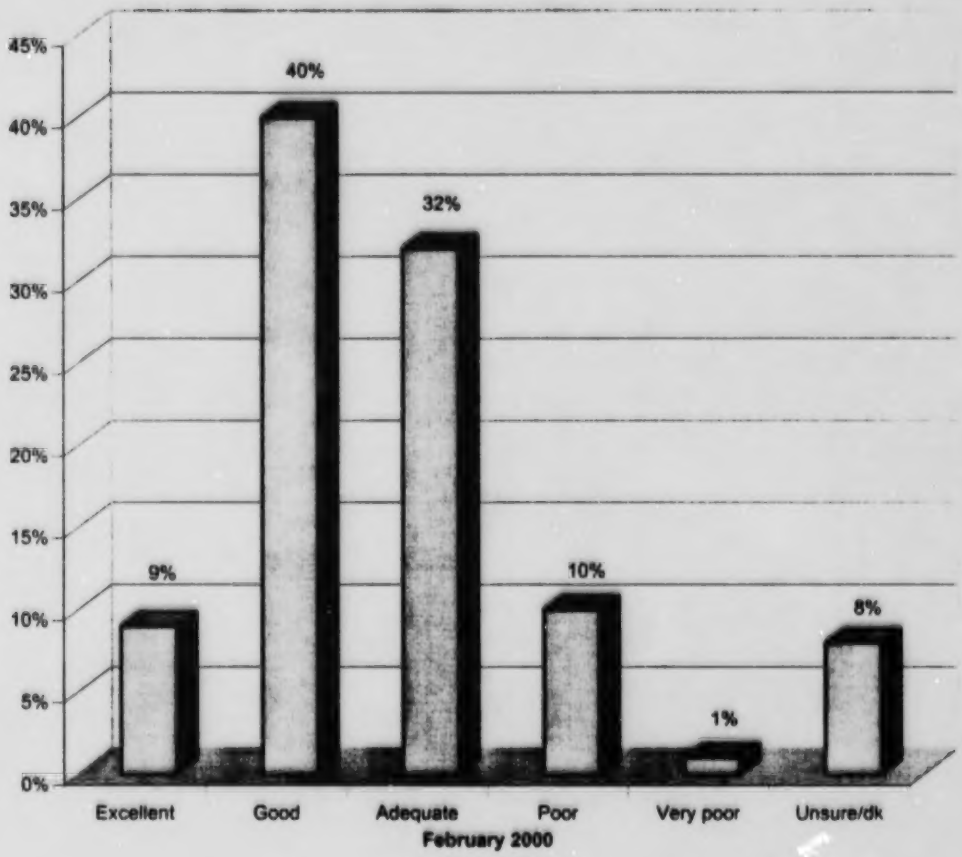
3.0 EDUCATION

Question 6. Compared to the rest of the country do you think the education system in Saskatchewan is better, the same or worse?



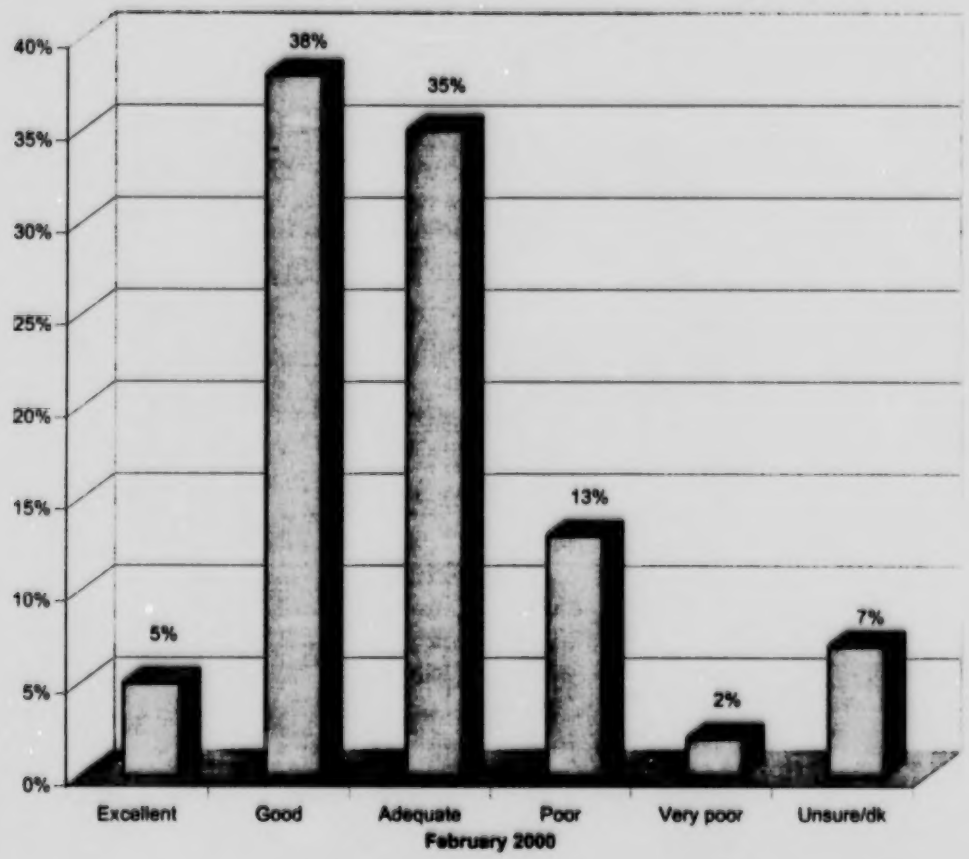
- Approximately two thirds (68%) of residents think the education system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

Question 7. Do you think the quality of elementary education in Saskatchewan is generally excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor?



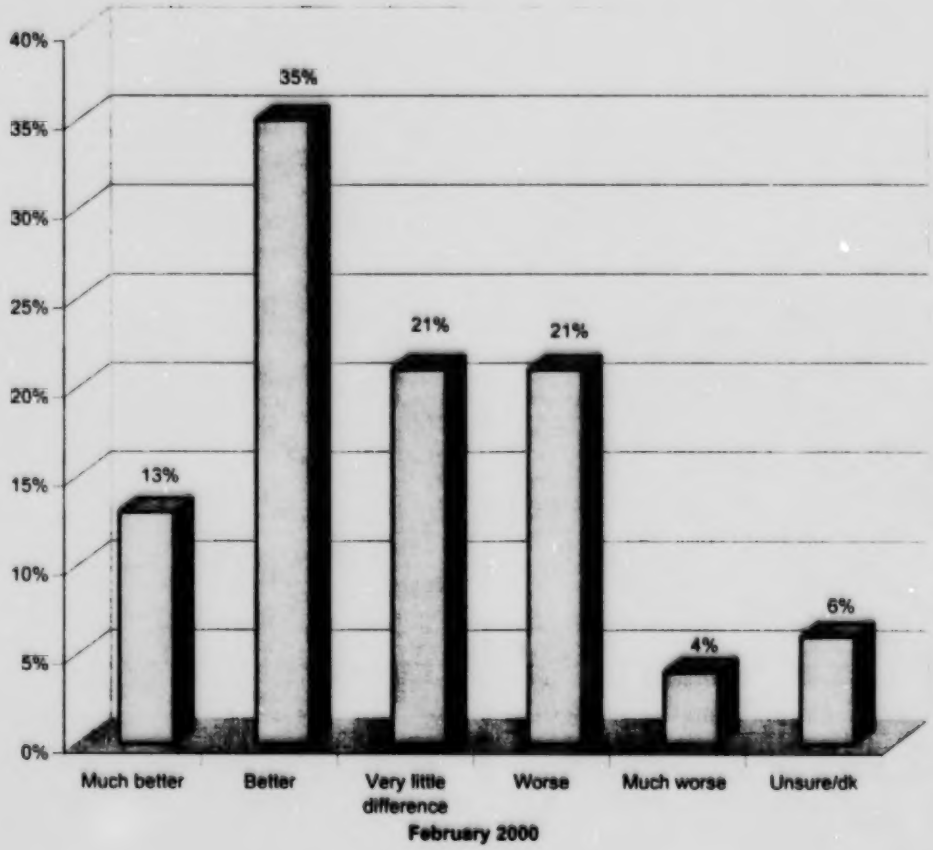
- The large majority (81%) of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of elementary education in Saskatchewan is adequate or better.

Question 8. Do you think that the quality of secondary or high school education in Saskatchewan is generally excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor?



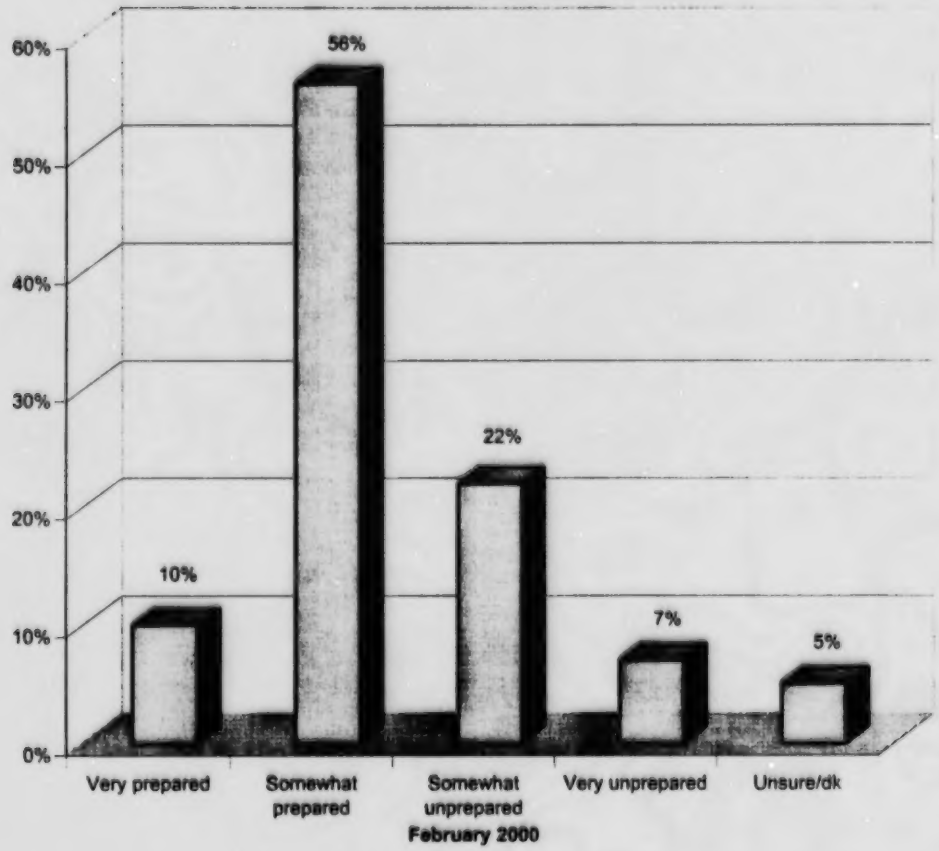
- The large majority (78%) think the quality of secondary or high school education in Saskatchewan is adequate or better.

Question 9. When you think of your own school education, do you believe students' education today is much better, better, worse, much worse or very little different compared to yours?



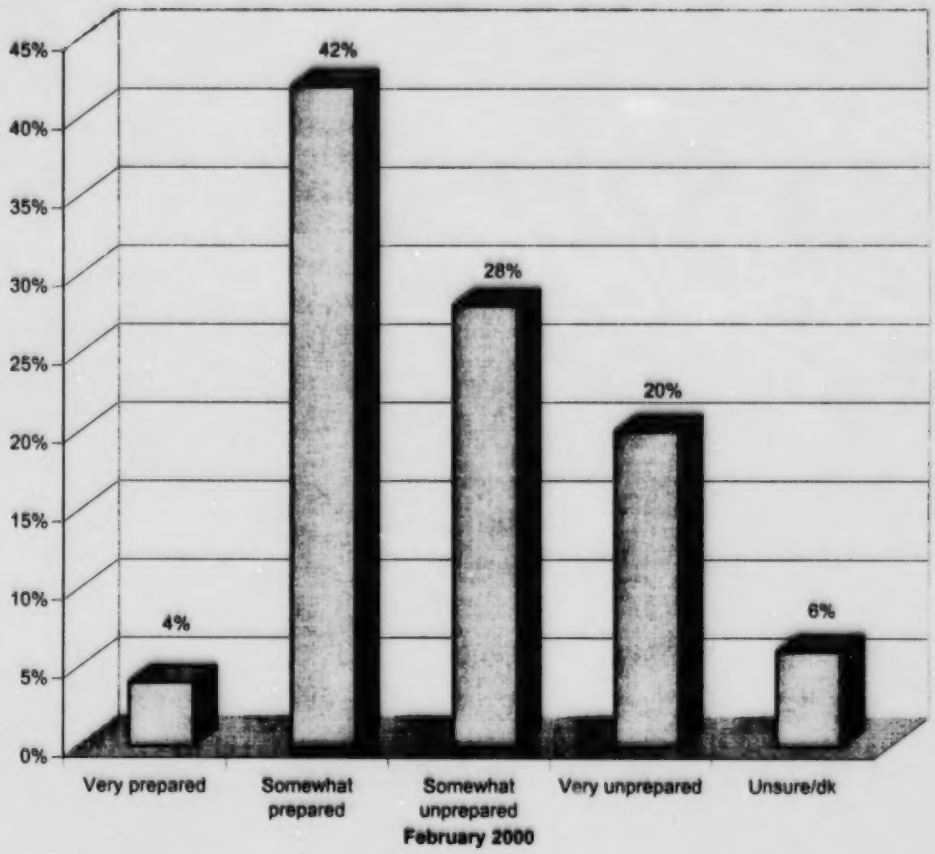
- Almost one half (48%) of Saskatchewan residents believe students' education today is better than the education they received; 21% believe there is very little difference.

Question 10. Which best describes how well prepared you think Saskatchewan high school students are for entering post-secondary institutions like colleges or universities? Do you think they are very well prepared, only somewhat prepared, somewhat unprepared or very unprepared?



- The majority (66%) of residents think Saskatchewan high school students are prepared for entering post-secondary institutions like colleges or universities.

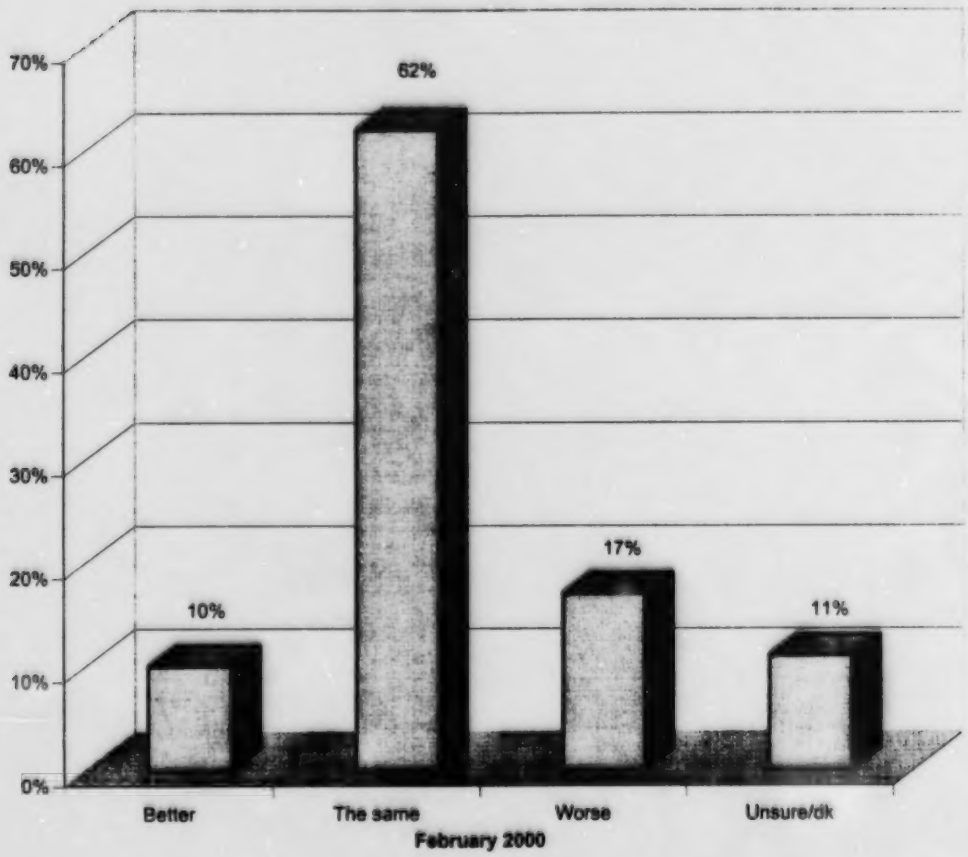
Question 11. How well prepared are high school students for entering the workforce?



- Slightly less than one half (46%) think Saskatchewan high school students are prepared for entering the workforce.

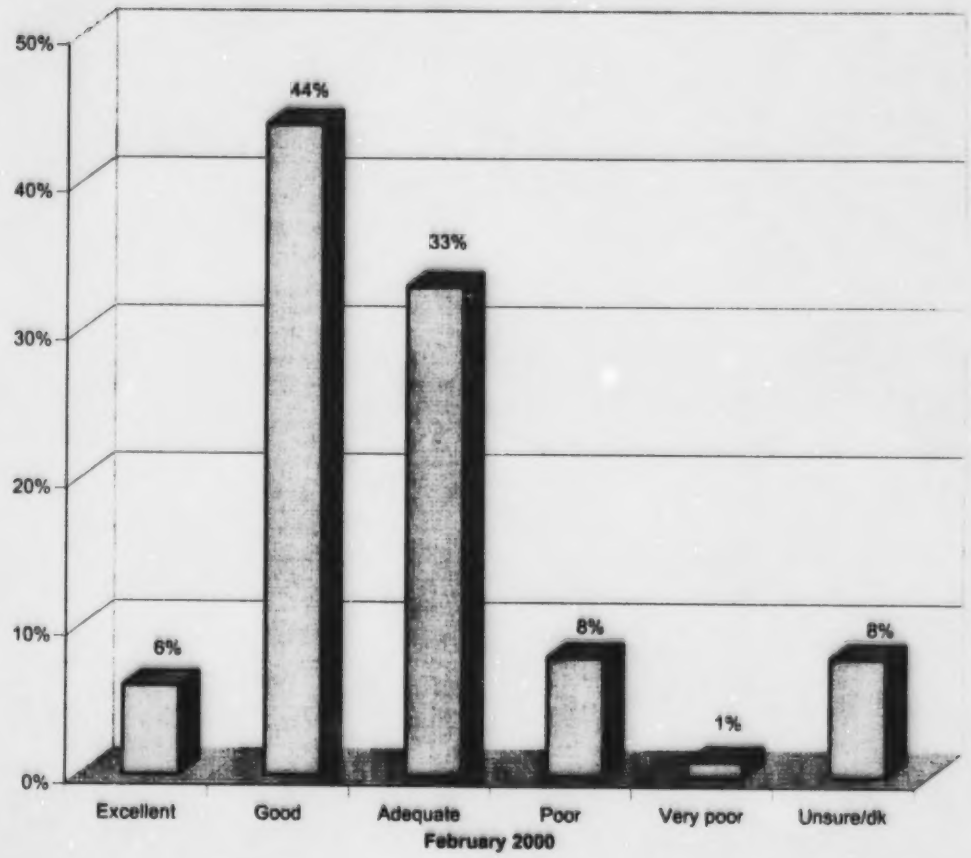
4.0 Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training

Question 12. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is better, the same or worse?



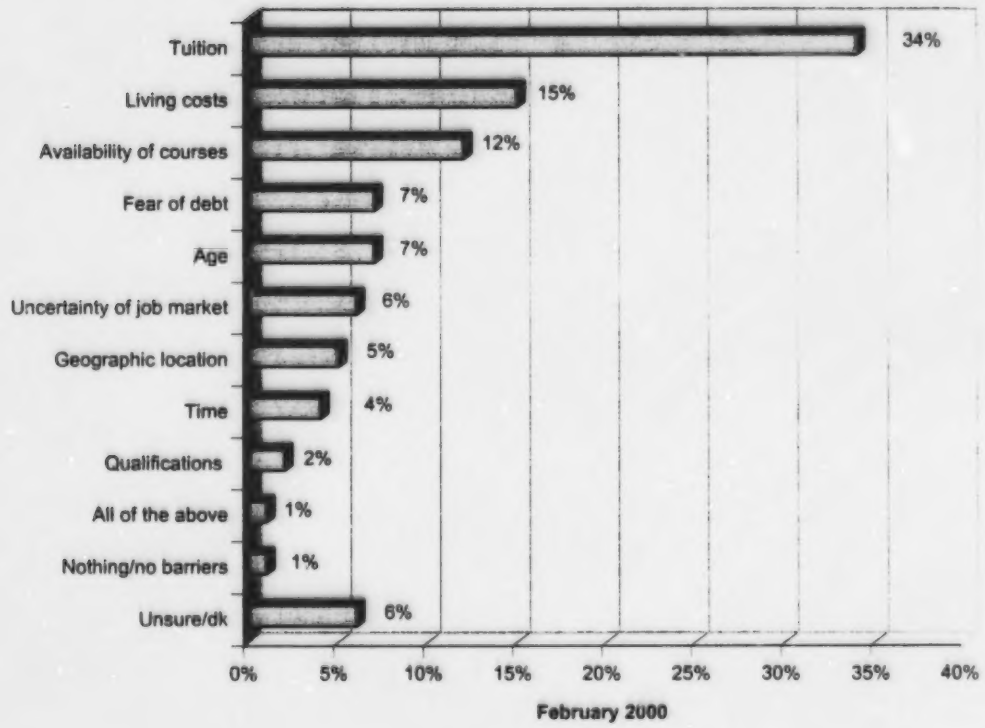
- The majority (72%) of residents think the post-secondary education and skills training system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

Question 13. Do you think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs is generally excellent, good, poor or very poor?



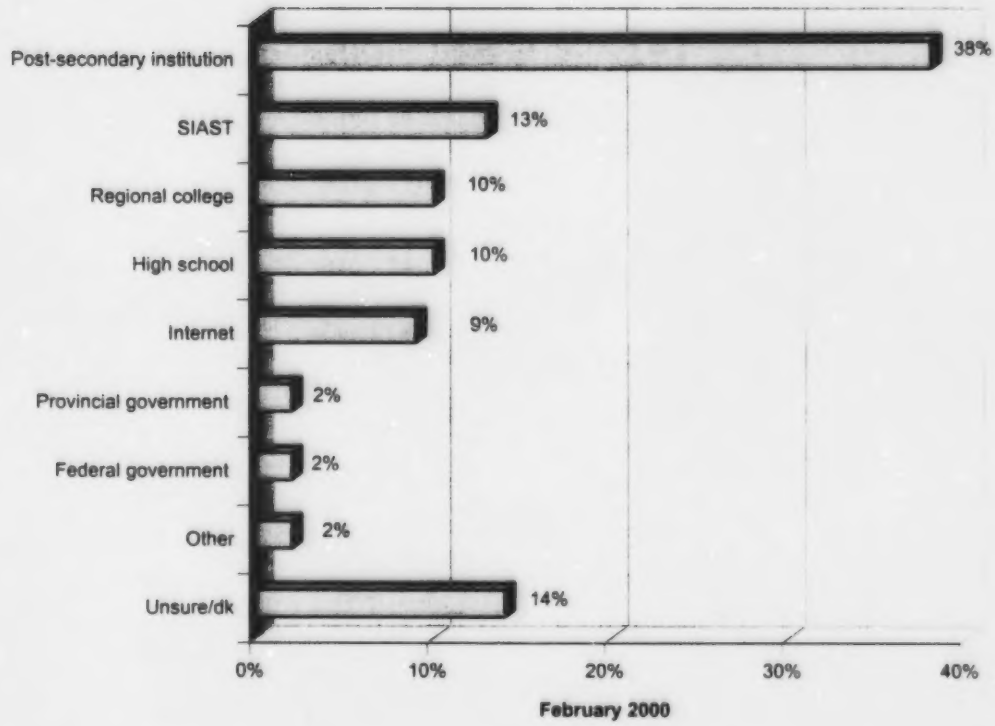
- The majority (83%) think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs is adequate or better.

Question 14. What barriers do you or your family members experience which prevent you from taking post-secondary education or training?



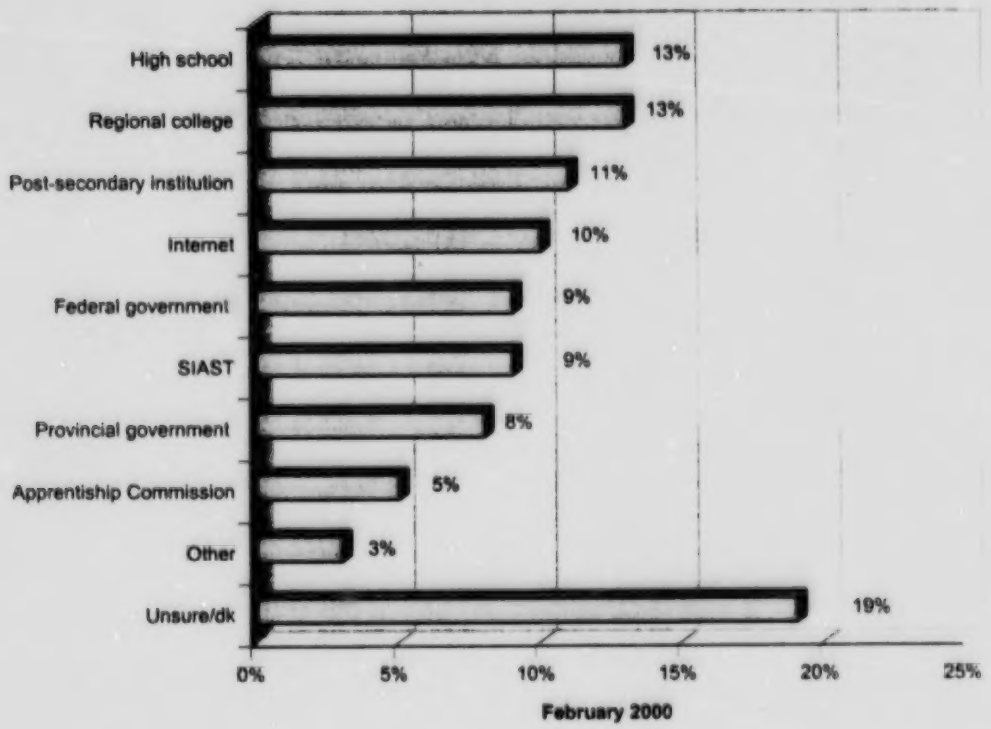
- Approximately 34% of Saskatchewan residents identify tuition costs as a barrier to post-secondary education or training for them or their family members, 15% mention living costs and 12% say availability of courses.

Question 15. Where would you go to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan?



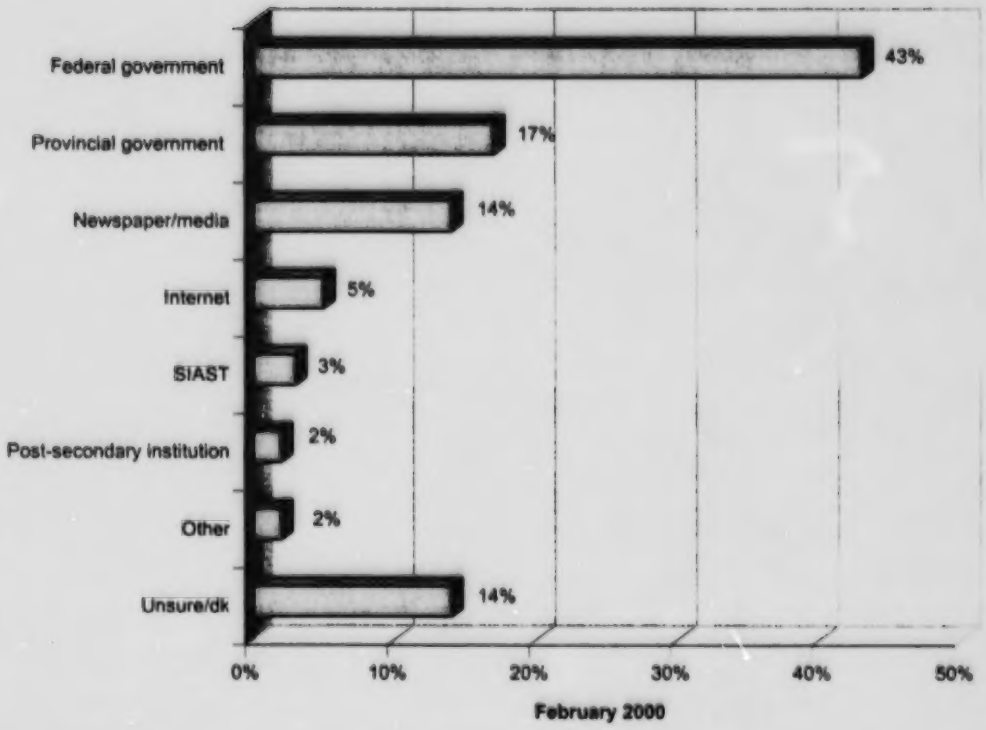
- More than one third (38%) of residents would go to a post-secondary institution to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan.

Question 16. Where would you go for career information?



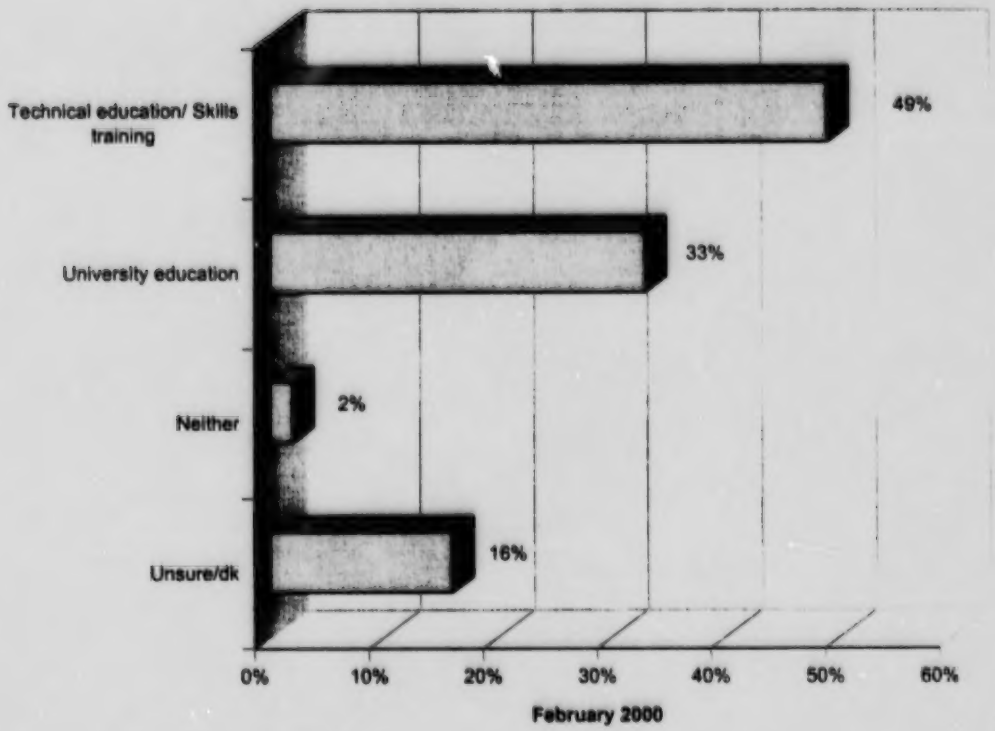
- Approximately 13% of Saskatchewan residents would go to a high school to get career information, another 13% would go to a regional college, 11% would go to a post-secondary institution and 10% would get career information over the Internet.

Question 17. Where would you go for information about job opportunities or to find workers?



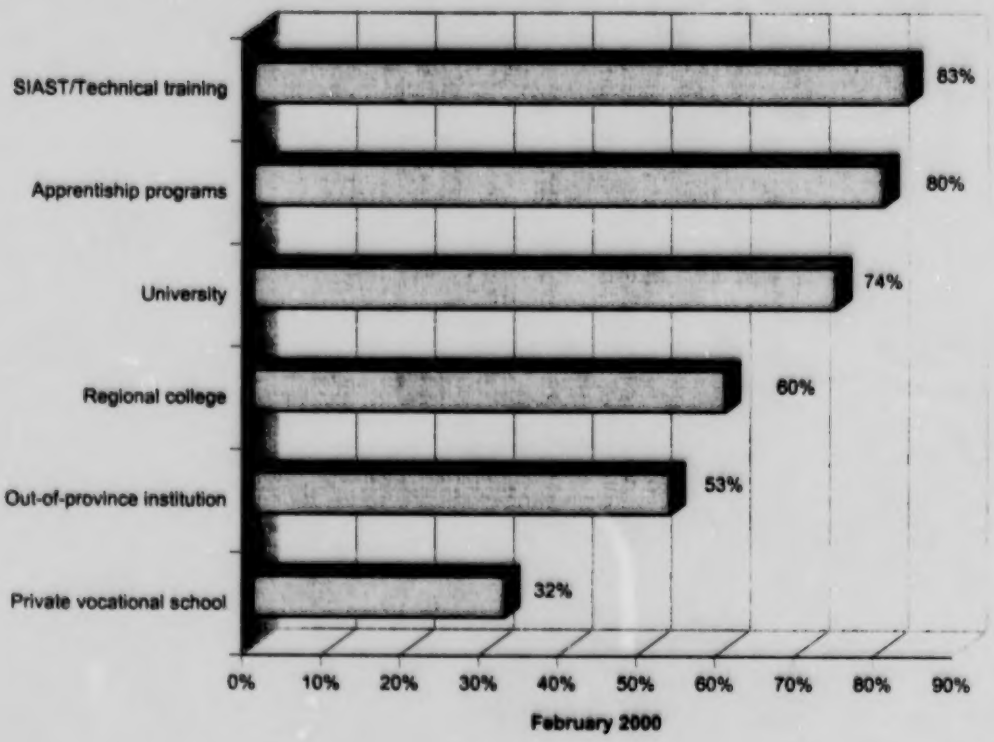
- More than one third (43%) of residents would go to the federal government for information about job opportunities or to find workers, 17% would go to the provincial government and 14% would go to the newspaper or media sources.

Question 18. If you were advising a young person today, would you recommend they choose technical education and skills training or a university education?



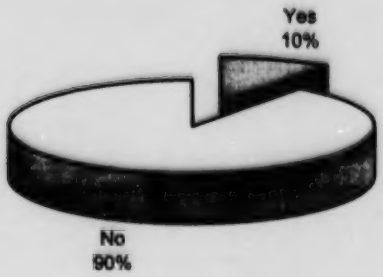
- Slightly less than one half 49% of Saskatchewan residents would recommend technical education and skills training if they were advising a young person today; 33% would recommend a university education.

Question 19. Which institution would you suggest they attend? Would you recommend...?



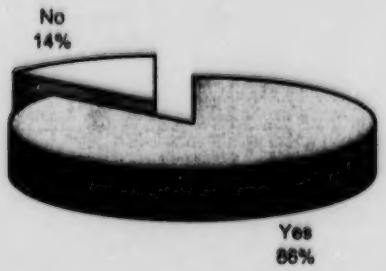
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents would recommend SIAST or technical training (83%), apprenticeship programs (80%), university (74%), a regional college (60%) and an out-of-province institution (53%).

Question 20. In the past month have you taken post-secondary education or training?



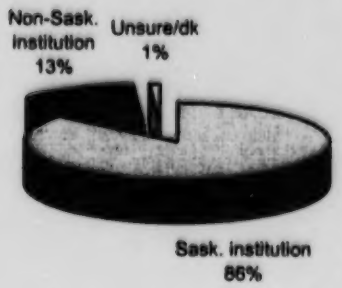
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (90%) have not taken post-secondary education or training in the past month; about 10% have.

Question 21. Was this education or training in person?



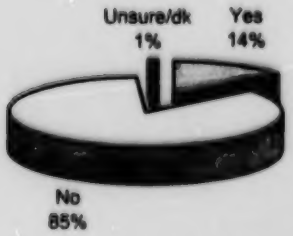
- Of those residents who have taken post-secondary training and education in the past month, the large majority (86%, or 8% of all respondents) took the education or training in person.

Question 22. Was this education at a Saskatchewan institution or a non-Saskatchewan institution?



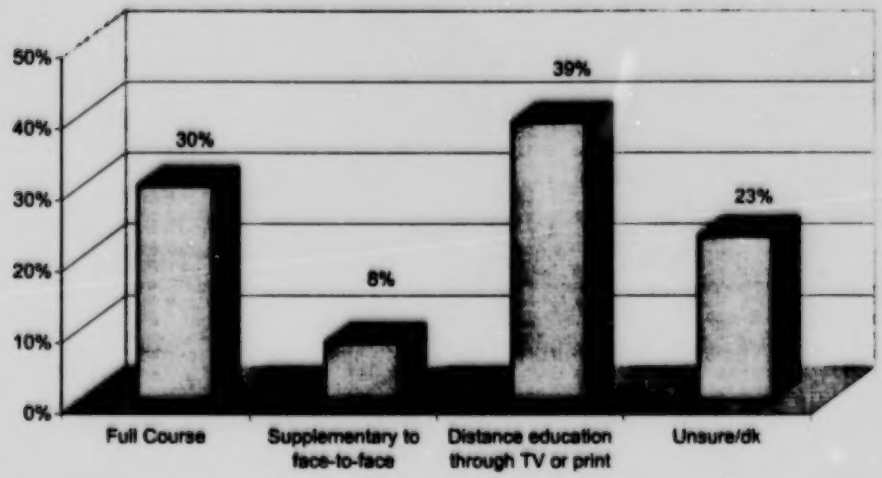
- Of those respondents who have taking education or training in the past month, the large majority (86%, or 8% of all respondents) did so through a Saskatchewan institution.

Question 23. Was this education or training by distance education including the Internet?



- Of those respondents who have taking education or training in the past month, more than one in ten (14%, or 1% of all respondents) did so through distance education, which includes the Internet.

Question 23a. If you have taken post-secondary education or training through the Internet, was this a...

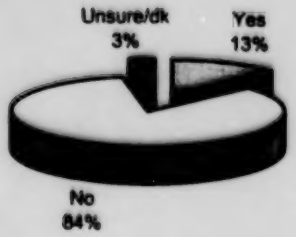


- Of those respondents who took education or training by distance education, approximately 39% (or less than 1% of all respondents) took the education or training through television or print, 30% (or less than 1% of all respondents) indicate it was a full course.

Question 24. Was this education towards a degree or certificate?

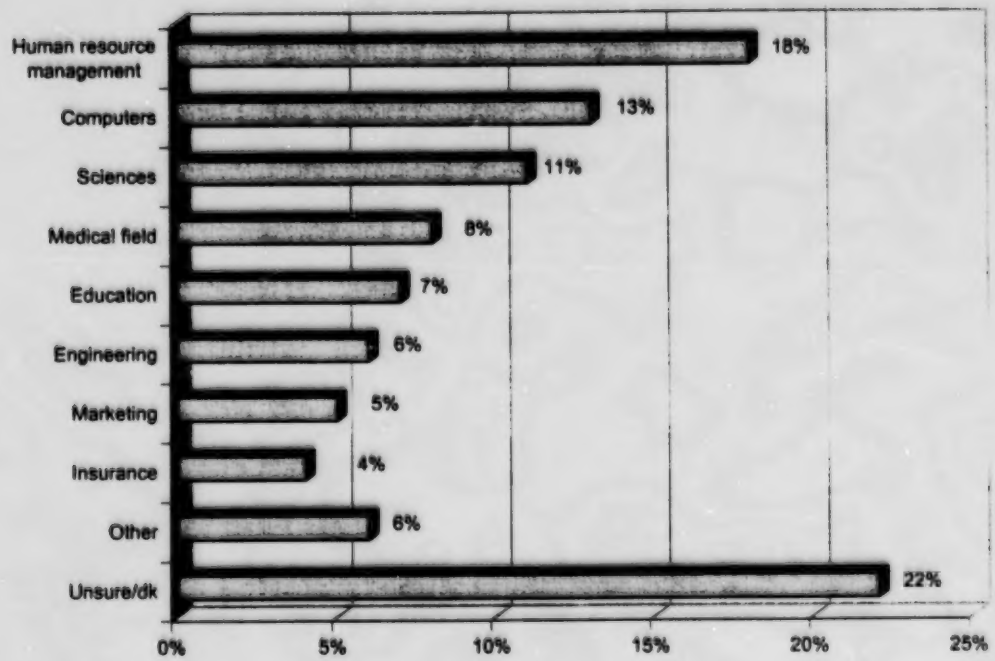
- Of those respondents who took education or training in the past month, the large majority (81%, or 8% of all respondents) indicate it was toward a degree or certificate.

Question 25. Was this education towards a degree or certificate outside of Saskatchewan?



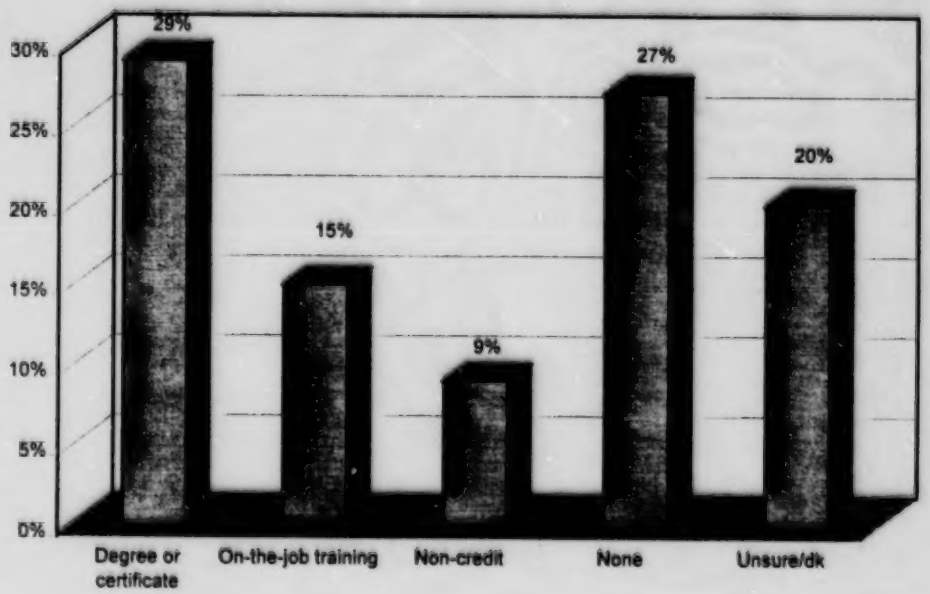
- Of those respondents who took education or training in the past month, approximately 13% (or 1% of all respondents) indicate it was toward a degree or certificate outside of Saskatchewan.

Question 27. What was the area of study?



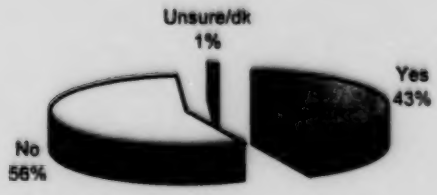
- Approximately 18% (or 2% of all respondents) of respondents who took post-secondary education or training in the past month took human resource management courses, 13% (or 1% of all respondents) took computer courses and 11% (or 1% of all respondents) took science courses.

Question 28. What formal study would you like to be able to take via the Internet?



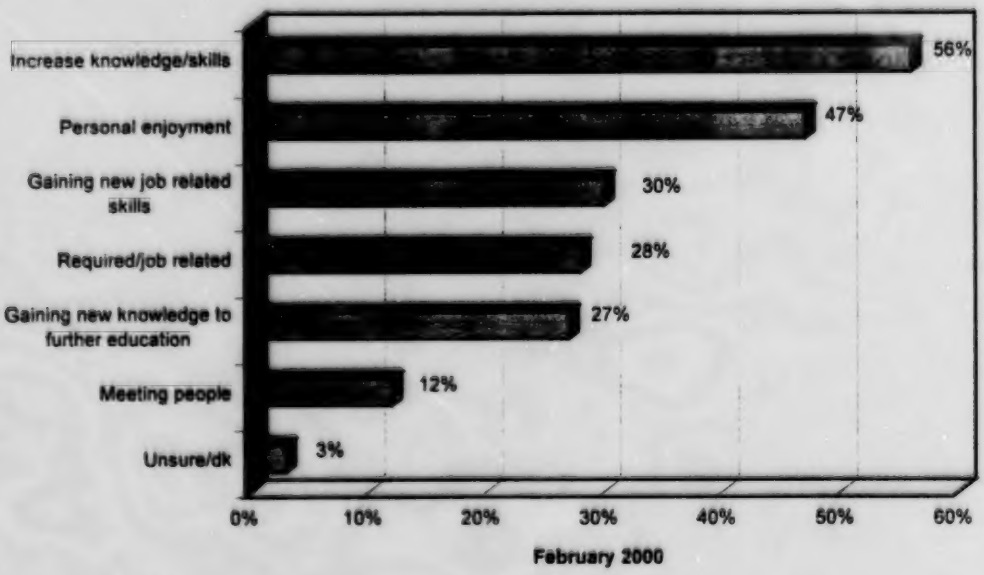
- More than one quarter (29%) of Saskatchewan residents would like to be able to take degree or certificate programs via the Internet, 15% would like on-the-job training and 9% would like to be able to take non-credit courses via the Internet.

Question 29. In the past month have you participated in informal education or training such as attending public lectures or reading self-help books?



- Approximately 43% of Saskatchewan residents have participated in informal education or training in the past month.

Question 30. Was it for...

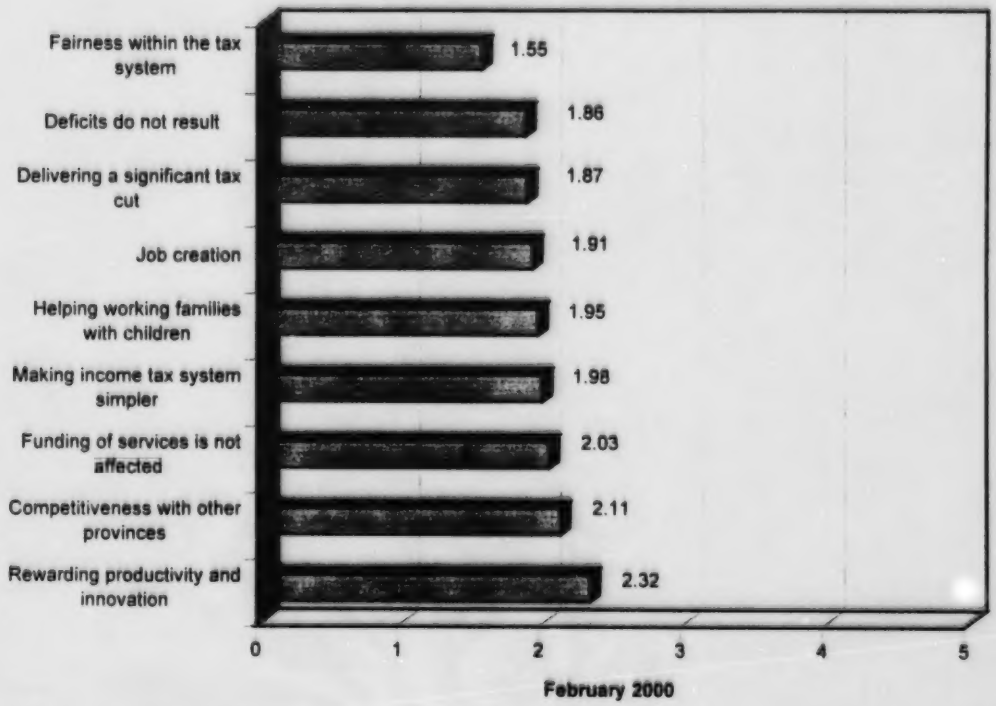


- Of those respondents who have participated in informal education or training in the past month, the majority (56%, or 24% of all respondents) did so to increase their knowledge and skills and 47% (20% of all respondents) did so for personal enjoyment.

5.0 TAXES

Question 31. If the provincial government were to change the current provincial tax system, how important are each of the following goals and priorities to you and your family? Please rank the following using a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'highest priority' and 5 being the 'lowest'.

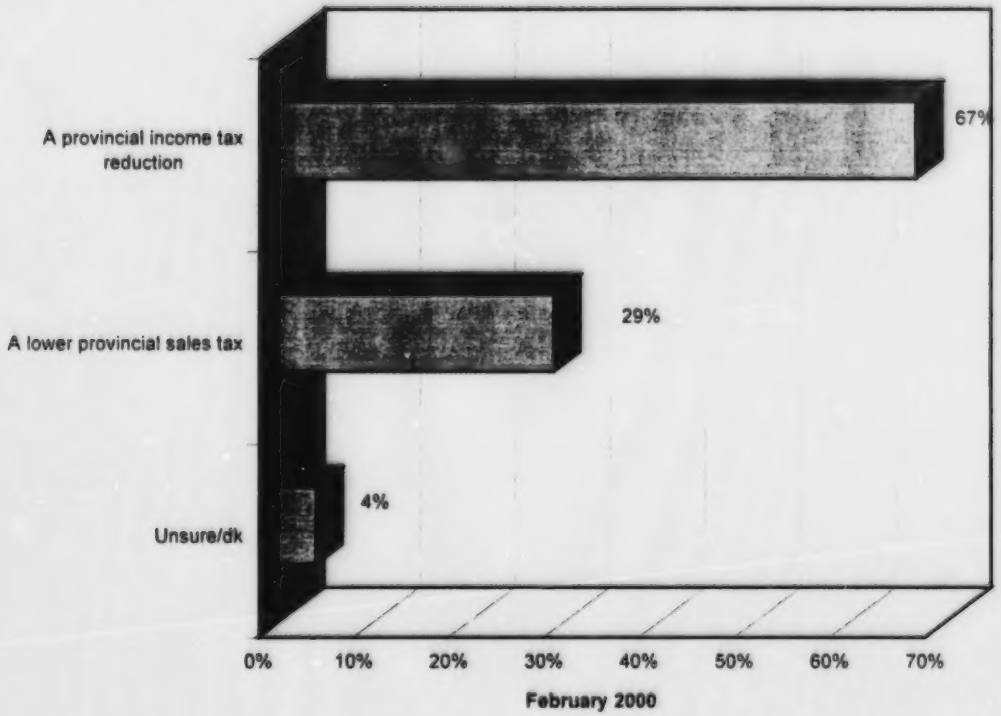
The following chart shows the mean average for each goal and priority after factoring out unsure responses. The closer the mean average is to a score of 1 (highest priority) the more important the goal and priority.



- The most important goals and priorities for Saskatchewan residents and their families is fairness within the tax system (1.55 mean score). Other important goals include ensuring that deficits do not result from changes to the tax system (1.86) and delivering a significant tax cut to them and their families (1.87).

Question 32. Thinking about what is important to you and your family, if the provincial government were to lower taxes, what would you see as benefiting your family more?

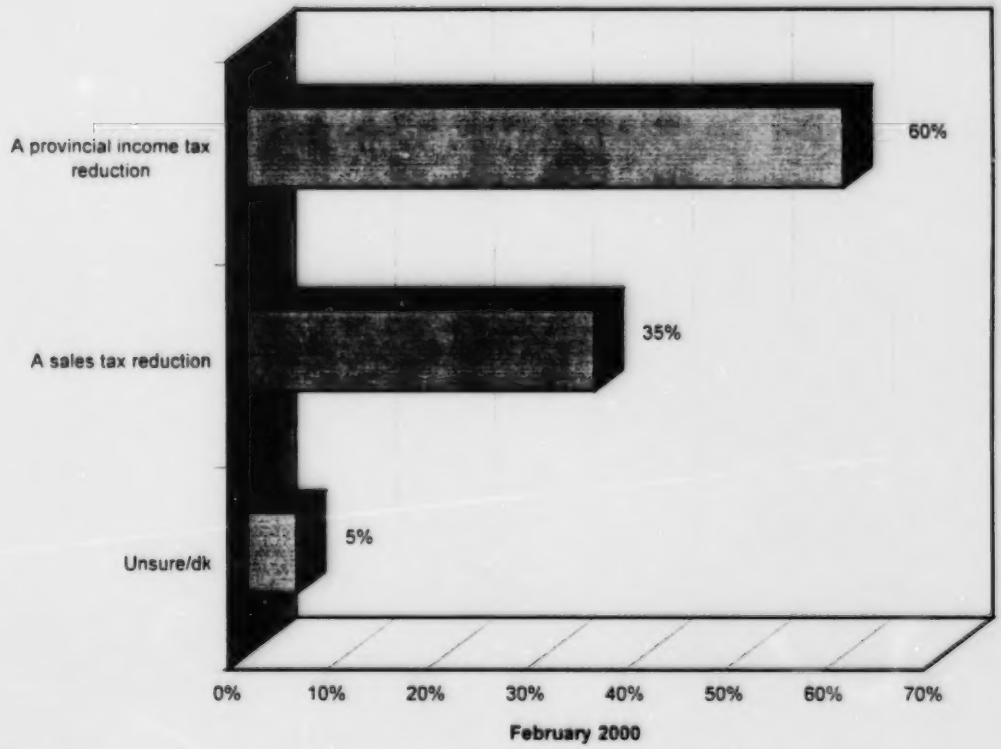
a) a lower sales tax, or
b) a provincial income tax reduction of about $500 to $1,000 a year for an average individual and about $1,000 to $2,000 for an average family with children



- Two thirds (67%) of Saskatchewan residents think an income tax reduction would benefit their family more if the provincial government were to lower taxes. Approximately 29% think a lower sales tax would benefit their family more.

Question 33. In terms of promoting fairness for all taxpayers, what do you think would be most effective?

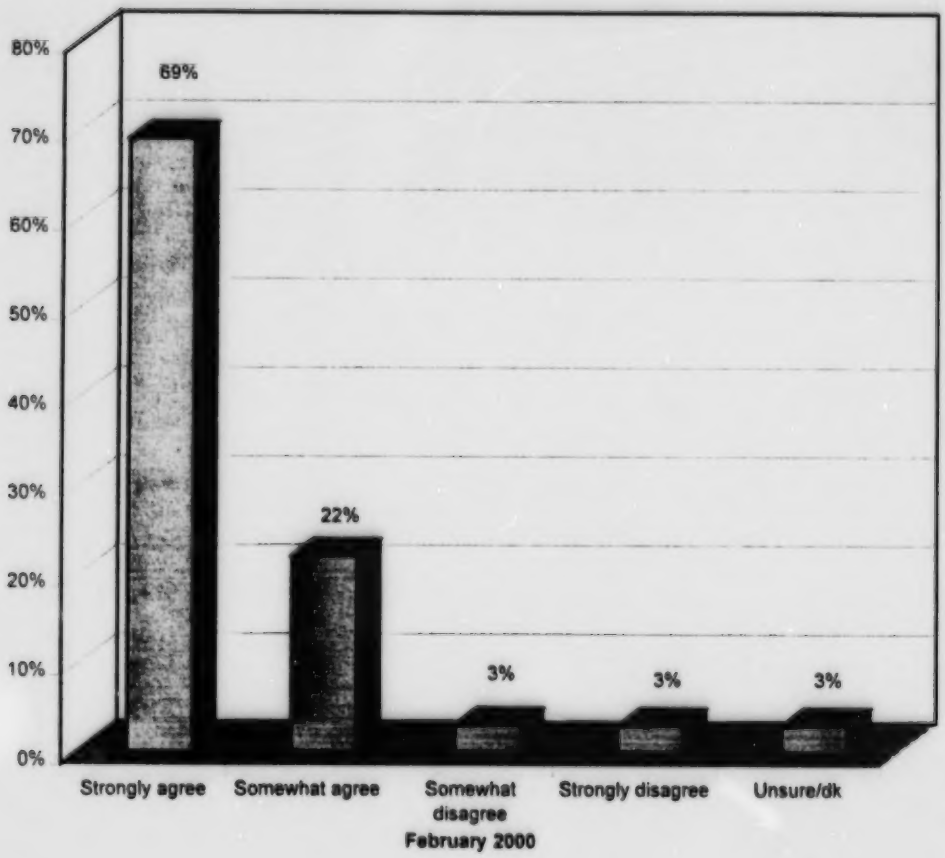
a) a sales tax reduction, or
b) a provincial income tax reduction of about $500 to $1,000 a year for an average individual and about $1,000 t0 $2,000 for an average family with children



- The majority (60%) of residents think a provincial income tax reduction would be most effective in terms of promoting fairness for all taxpayers. Approximately 35% think a sales tax reduction would be most effective.

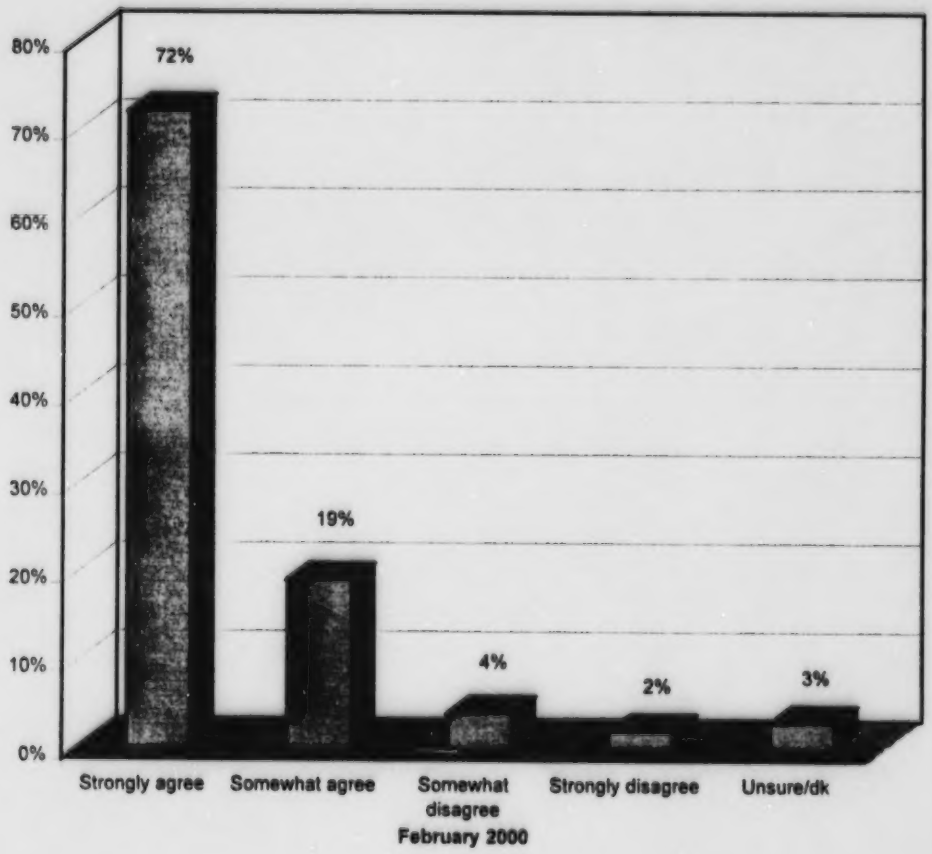
With the following statements, answer using strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree

Question 34. Saskatchewan's working families are generally overtaxed and a general income tax cut, if it does not result in deficits or cutbacks in important government services, would be good for you and your family and should be a major priority for the provincial government.



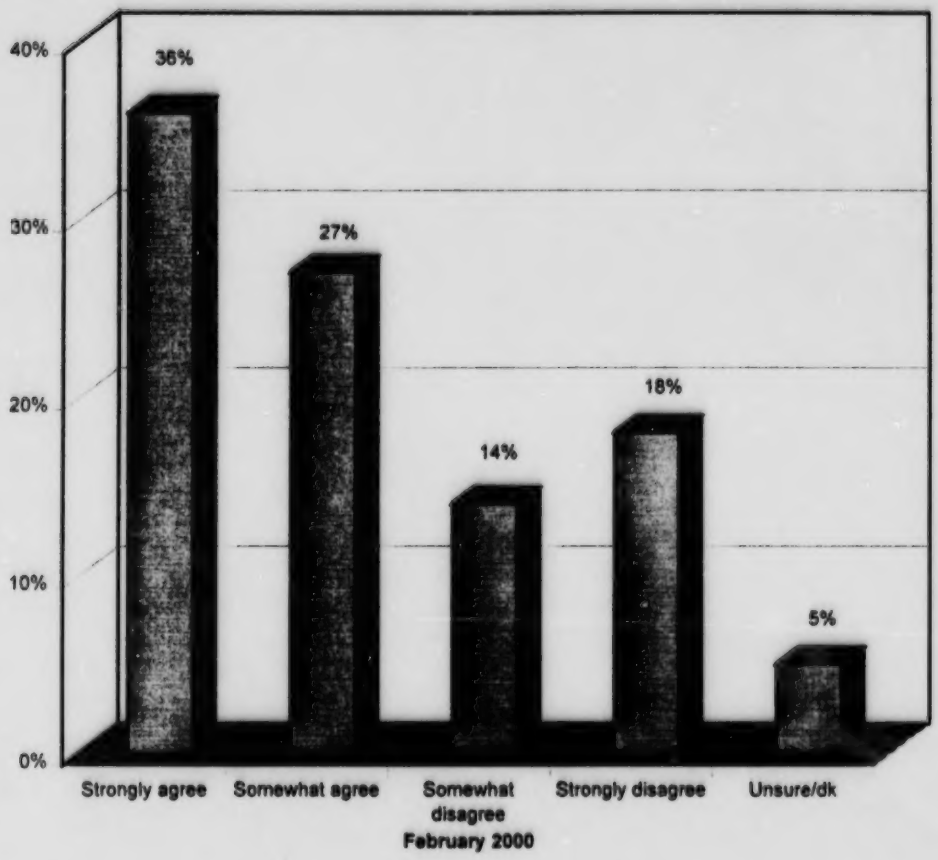
- The large majority (91%) of residents agree Saskatchewan's working families are generally overtaxed and a general income tax cut would be good for them and their family and should be a major priority for the provincial government. The majority (69%) strongly agree.

Question 35. A substantial, overall reduction in the taxes we pay would be good for you and your family and would help keep young people and families in Saskatchewan.



- The large majority (91%) of residents agree a substantial, overall reduction in the taxes we pay would be good for them and their family and would help keep young people and families in Saskatchewan. The majority (72%) strongly agree.

Question 36. I would be in favour of paying sales tax on more items if income taxes were reduced to the point that I and my family had a net tax savings and would be better off overall.

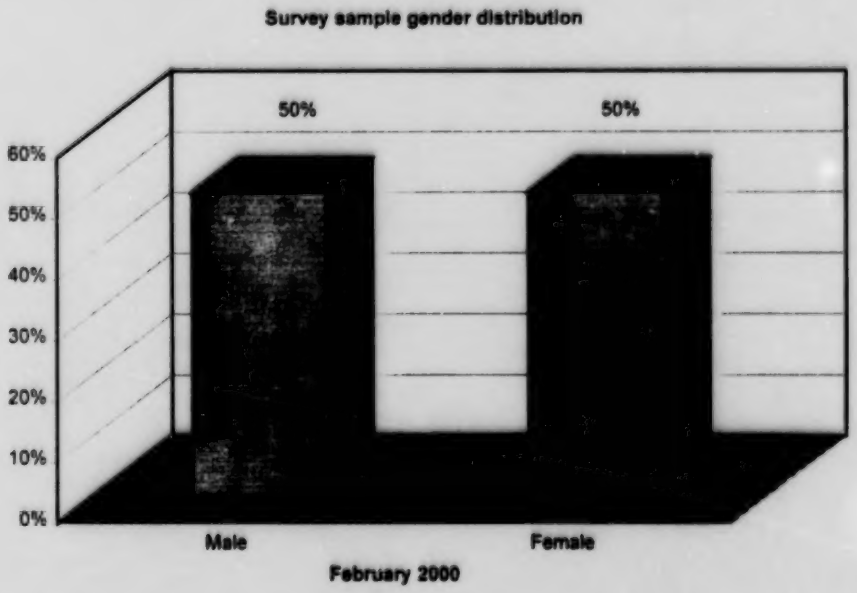


- The majority (63%) of Saskatchewan residents would be in favour of paying sales tax on more items if income taxes were reduced to the point that they and their family had a net tax savings and would be better off overall.

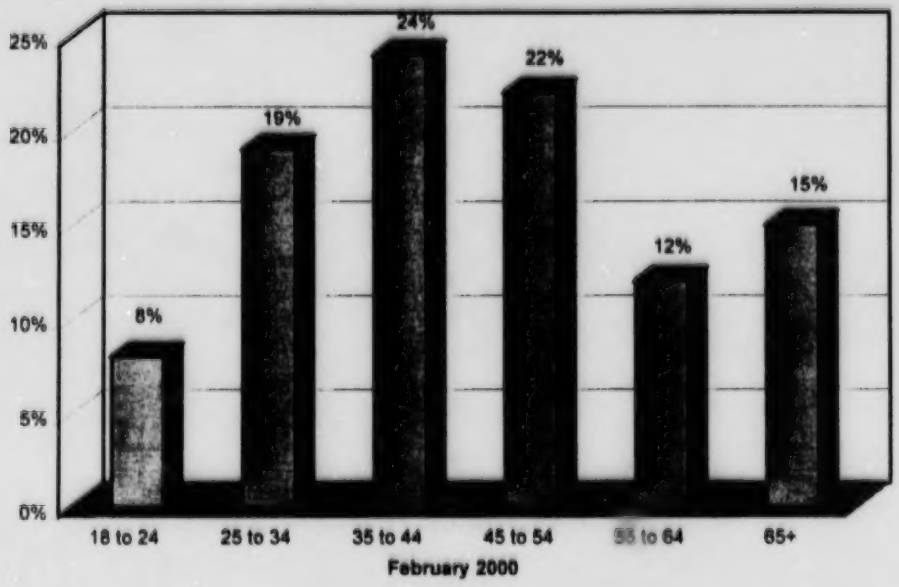
APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The omnibus public opinion sample frame is constructed to facilitate proportionate representation of various demographic characteristics evident within the province of Saskatchewan. This ensures that opinions of all the various types of residents in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report. The demographic distributions from the survey sample generally parallel the province's actual population distributions, as measured by Statistics Canada census data.

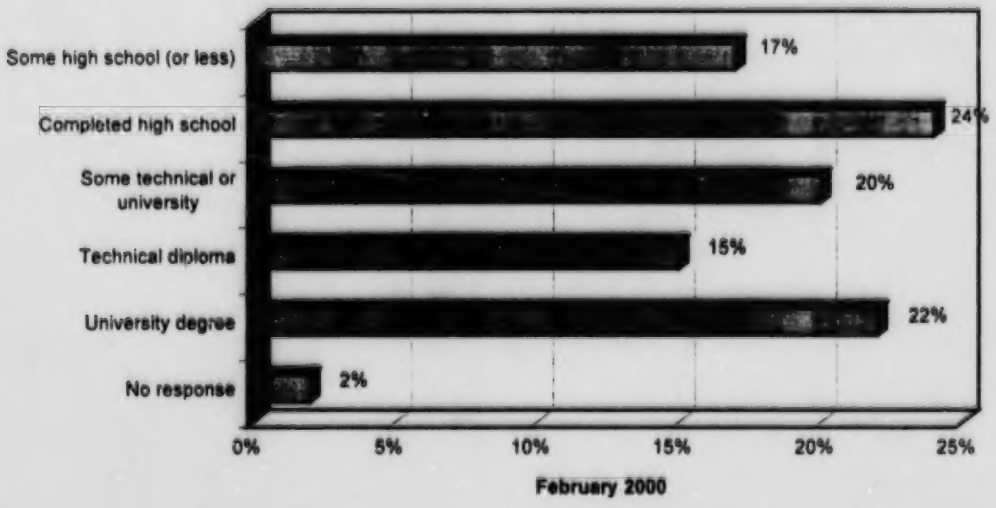
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.



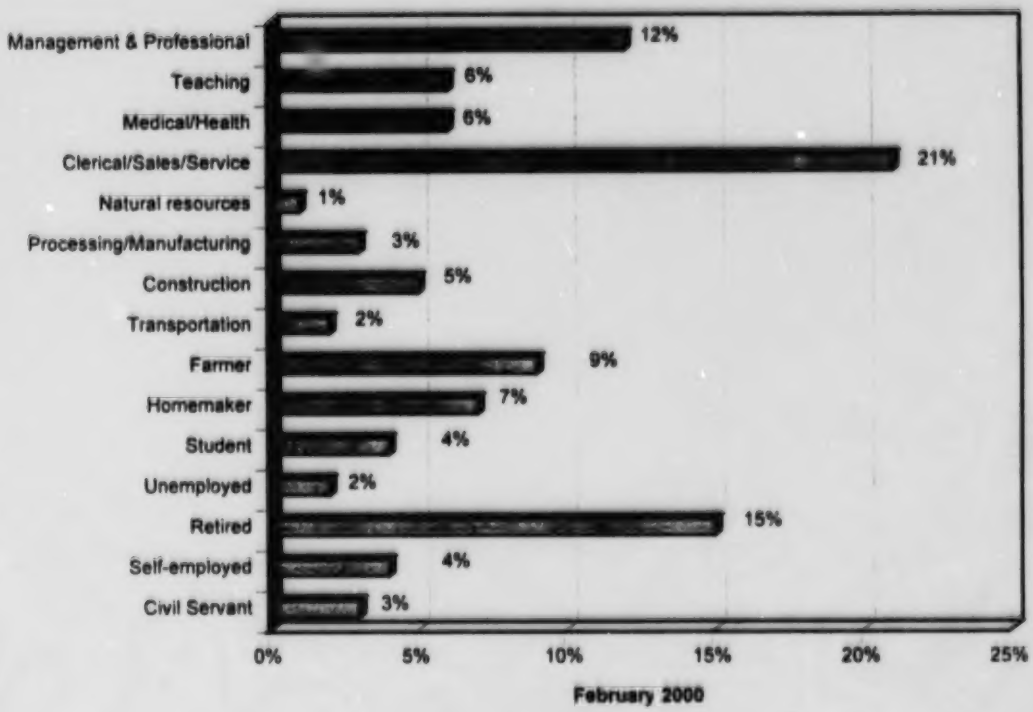
Survey sample age distribution



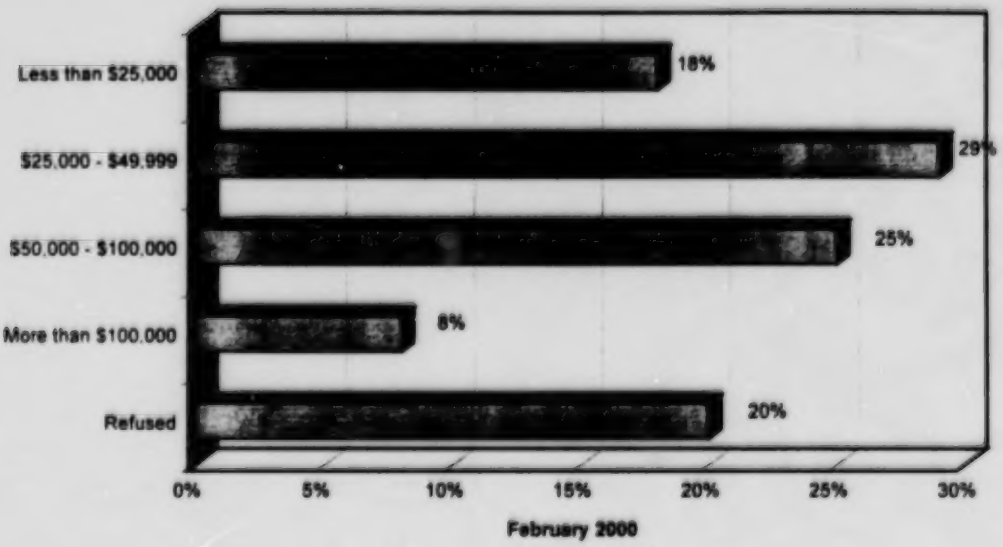
Survey sample education distribution



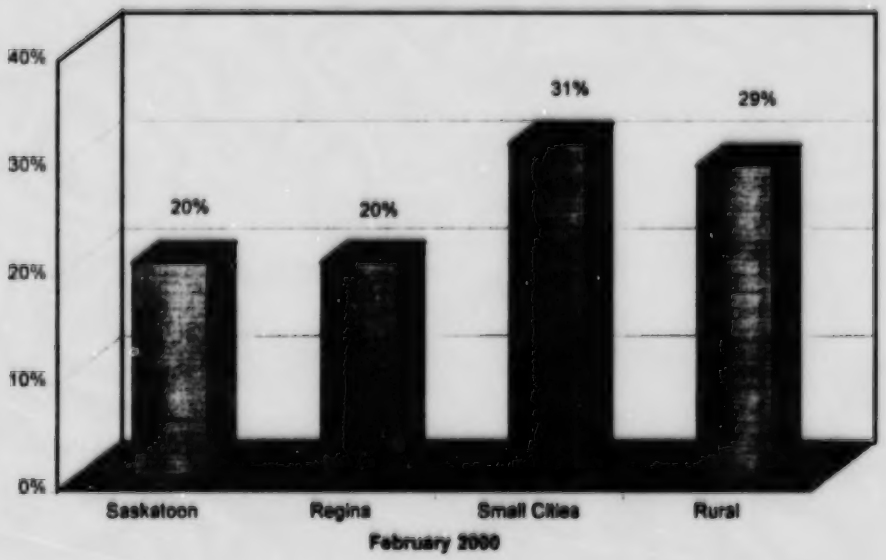
Survey sample occupation distribution



Survey sample income distribution



Survey sample regional distribution



Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Health

Date:	**February, 2000**
Supplier:	**Pulse Research Limited, Saskatoon**
Cost:	**$9,892**

REPORT

"HEALTH CARE SYSTEM" SURVEY

Prepared for:
Saskatchewan Health

February, 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Saskatchewan Health is conducting research on Saskatchewan people's views regarding the health care system. As part of the research project, a survey of 800 Saskatchewan residents was conducted in February 2000 by Pulse Research Limited (part of the Calibre Group of Companies) on behalf of the Minister of Health. The survey results have a margin of error of ±3.5% at 95% confidence level.

Major Findings

Overall experience and ratings of health care services in Saskatchewan

- The majority of the respondents (78.2%) were able to provide the name of the health district they live in.

- Slightly over half of the respondents (51.3%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received hospital care in the hospital that is closest to where they live during the past year. More than 85% of them rated the quality of care as "excellent" or "good".

- Approximately one-eighth of the respondents (12.9%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received nursing home services in Saskatchewan. The majority of them rated the quality of care as "excellent" or "good" (82.6%), while 16.7% rated it as "poor" or "very poor".

- Approximately one-sixth of the respondents (16.9%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received home care in Saskatchewan during the past year. Over four-fifths of them (83.0%) indicated that the quality of care that was received was "excellent" or "good", while 15.8% indicated that the quality of care was "poor" or "very poor".

- When asked to whom would they raise their concerns to if the services were not satisfactory, the largest proportion of the respondents (34.8%) were not sure where to raise their concerns. Over one-seventh of the respondents (15.1%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to a health district board member, while a similar proportion (14.0%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to the immediate supervisor or the hospital/nursing home/home care services administration or director. Approximately one-tenth of the respondents (9.9%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA).

- When asked to rate their health district in ensuring that good quality services are delivered in their area, the majority of the respondents rated their health district "very good" (11.4%) or "good" (51.7%), while 28.8% rated "poor" or "very poor". Approximately one in every eleven (8.1%) indicated that they did not know how good a job their health district was doing.

- When asked to rate their health district in spending tax dollars efficiently, the ratings were significantly lower compared with the ratings of ensuring the delivery of good quality services. Less than two-fifths of the respondents rated their health district "very good" or "good" (5.0% and 33.6% respectively). Nearly one-fifth of the respondents (19.7%) indicated that they did not know how good a job their health district was doing in this regard.

- The vast majority of the respondents (84.2%) indicated that they had never raised a concern with their health district board member, while 15.1% indicated that they had done so. Respondents who worked for a health care organization were significantly more likely to have indicated that they had raised concerns with a health district board member (37.7% vs. 15.1% overall).

Preference between maintaining or reducing the number of health districts

- The majority of the respondents were in favour of maintaining the same number and size of current health districts, with 63.1% indicating that the number of health districts should stay the same and 28.5% indicating the number should be reduced. Less than one-eleventh of the respondents (8.3%) were undecided.

- Respondents who were over 35 were slightly more likely to be in favour of reducing the number of health districts than respondents under 35 (30.4% and 23.3% respectively). Respondents who had an annual household income of more than $40,000 were more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts than those with an income of less than $40,000 (39.9%, and 24.2% respectively). Male respondents were also more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts than females (37.4% and 25.0% respectively).

- No significant correlation was found between whether or not respondents had voted in health district elections and their preference.

- While the preference between maintaining and reducing the number of health districts was correlated to the responses to all arguments, the arguments could be ranked as follows based on their strength of correlation with the preference, from the strongest to the weakest:

    - Changing health district boundaries would disrupt our health care system. That's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same;
    - Larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of the districts the same;
    - Reducing the number of health districts might lead to loss of jobs in my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same;
    - A reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of the districts the same;
    - Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts;
    - Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That's a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts;

- Larger health districts would allow for better planning and integration of services. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts; and
- Larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts.

- When the respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the argument that larger health district would allow for better planning and integration of services, the responses were equally split, with a slightly higher proportion of the respondents disagreeing with the argument.

- When the respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the argument that larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from their communities, The respondents were less divided. The majority of the respondents indicated that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the argument (15.2% and 47.9% respectively).

- The majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that a reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures (18.4% "strongly agree" and 42.3% "agree").

- A combined total of 54.9% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services (7.9% "strongly agree" and 47.0% "agree").

- The majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "reducing the number of health districts might lead to a loss of jobs in my community" (13.2% and 43.3% respectively).

- The respondents were equally split on the argument that "reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration". While 46.8% indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the argument (9.4% and 37.4%). 47.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (38.5% and 9.2% respectively).

Preference between elected or appointed board members

- Over two-thirds of the respondents (68.2%) indicated that they had never voted in a health district election, while 28.8% indicated that they had voted. Respondents who were under the age of 25 were less likely to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election than respondents who were over 25 (10.1% and 32.0% respectively). Respondents who worked for a health care organization were more than twice as likely than other respondents to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election (58.0% and 26.1% respectively).

- The majority of the respondents (51.7%) indicated that the health boards should be a mixture of elected and appointed members. The second largest proportion of the respondents (35.5%) indicated that they preferred elected boards. Even though a significant proportion of respondents indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the arguments that health board members should be appointed, only slightly more than one-twelfth of the respondents (8.6%) was in favour of appointed boards only.

- Respondents who were over 35 were slightly more likely to be in favour of elected board than those under 35 (37.3% and 30.3% respectively). Respondents over 35 were also more likely to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election than those under 35 had (32.8% and 17.1% respectively).

- Slightly over half of the respondents (51.5%) indicated that a good reason to go to appointed boards is that we need to have the most experienced and qualified people running the health care system.

- Not withstanding the fact that 68.2% of the respondents indicated that they had never voted in a health district election, the vast majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "being able to vote is how I can make sure my voice is heard" (20.2% and 62.2% respectively).

- Less than two-fifths of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that a good reason to go to appointed boards is to avoid elected board members to spend too much money to try to win re-election (4.3% and 35.2% respectively).

- Over 70% of the respondents indicated that a good reason to have elected boards is to avoid the government appointing its own friends (20.7% "strongly agree" and 50.9% "agree").

- A total of 50.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument that if the government appointed health district board members, it will not be able to blame anyone else when things go wrong or when an unpopular decision is made. Respondents who had an annual household income of less than $40,000 were more likely to have strongly agreed or agreed with the argument than respondents with an income of over $40,000 (52.8% and 38.5% respectively).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Saskatchewan Health is conducting research on Saskatchewan people's views regarding the health care system. As part of the research project, a survey of 800 Saskatchewan residents was conducted in February 2000 by Pulse Research Limited on behalf of Saskatchewan Health. The survey results have a margin of error of ±3.5% at 95% confidence level.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed by Saskatchewan Health in conjunction with Calibre Strategic Services (SK) Inc. representatives. Both closed and open-ended questions were used to gather information. The questionnaire was pretested and adjustments were made as necessary to improve wording clarity. See Appendix 1 for a copy of the survey.

2.2 Survey Sample

In total, there were 800 respondents. The random sample was provided by Calibre Strategic Services (SK) Inc. and was derived from local telephone directories stored on Canada Phone™ on CD-ROM.

2.3 Survey Administration

Telephone calls were made between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. from February 22 to 25, 2000. All surveys were administered by Calibre Strategic Services (SK) Inc.

The number of surveys administered on each of the survey dates were as follows:

February 22, 2000	116	14.5%
February 23, 2000	235	29.3%
February 24, 2000	243	30.3%
February 25, 2000	208	25.9%
Total	**802**	**100.0%**

2.4 Response Rates

The following chart represents the response for the numbers dialed which were necessary to achieve the required successful rate:

RESPONSE RATES

Response	#	%
Completed	802	16.4
Decline	1,112	22.8
Not Qualified	464	9.5
Not Available	315	6.4
Busy Signals/No Answer/Answer Machine	1,626	33.3
Not in Service	469	9.6
Fax	99	2.0
Total	**4,887 Numbers Dialed**	**100.0**

In total, 4,887 phone numbers were dialled in the survey, 16.4% of which resulted in the completion of a survey. The majority of the unsuccessful attempts were Busy Signals/No Answer/Answer Machine (33.3%).

The proportion of respondents declining to participate in the survey was 22.8%; the reasons for declining to participate included:

- Not interested
- Too busy
- Don't do surveys

In total, 99 respondents (2.0%) were classified as "not qualified" for the following reasons:

- The respondent did not speak English
- The respondent was unable to understand the survey
- Business phone number
- Age

2.5 Survey Analysis

All 800 surveys were conducted by Calibre Strategic Services Inc. – Pulse Research Limited in Saskatoon. Surveys were administered using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software. This software allows surveyors to input respondent data directly into the computer.which reduces data input errors. The CATI system automatically verifies each response to ensure that data falls within specified parameters for each quantitative question.

At the completion of the survey administration all data was input into an SPSS datafile. Open-ended questions were coded as appropriate. A series of computer checks were made to ensure that the data was consistent and suitable for statistical analysis.

The frequency distribution results of all questions were computed. Where appropriate, cross tabulations were performed with ten demographic variables to identify attitudes and opinions specific to a particular market segment. The demographic variables and their groupings were as follows:

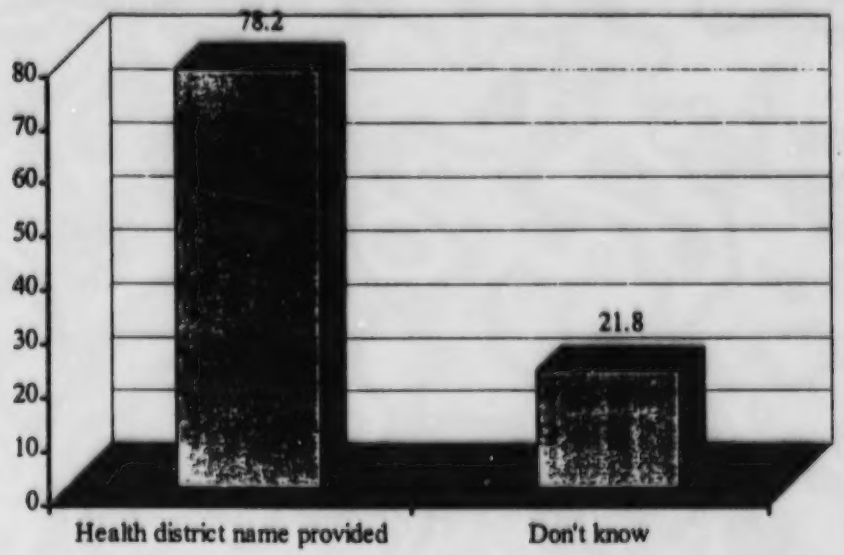
1.	Age of Interviewee	18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50-64, and 65 and over
2.	Household Income	<$20,000, $20,000-$39,000, $4,0000-$59,000, $60,000-79,000, $80,000-$99,000 and >$100,000
3.	Gender	Male and Female
4.	Health district	
5.	Work in health care	Respondent, Respondent's family member, and none

The total sample size and the corresponding margin of error of results was as follows:

Sample size:	800	$\pm$ 3.5 percent

3.0 RESULTS

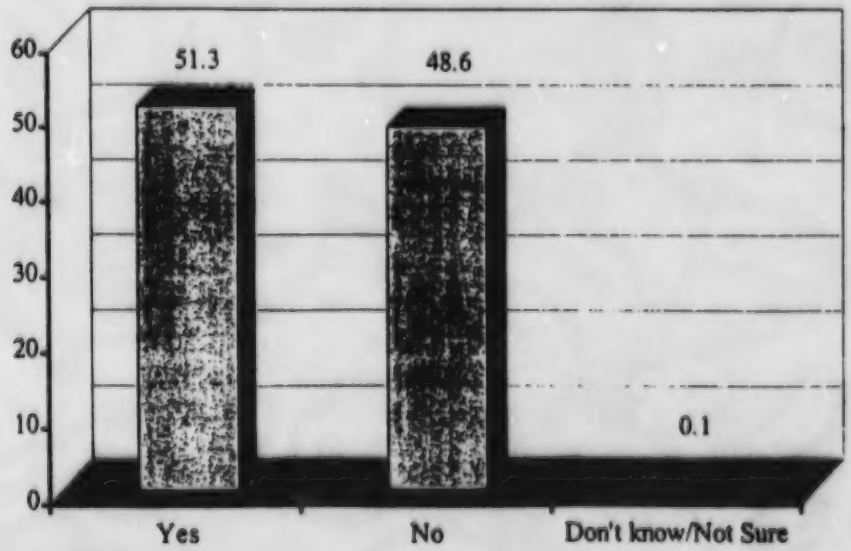
Q01. What health district do you live in?



The majority of the respondents (78.2%) were able to provide the name of the health district they live in, although more than one-fifth (21.8%) was not sure what health district they live in.

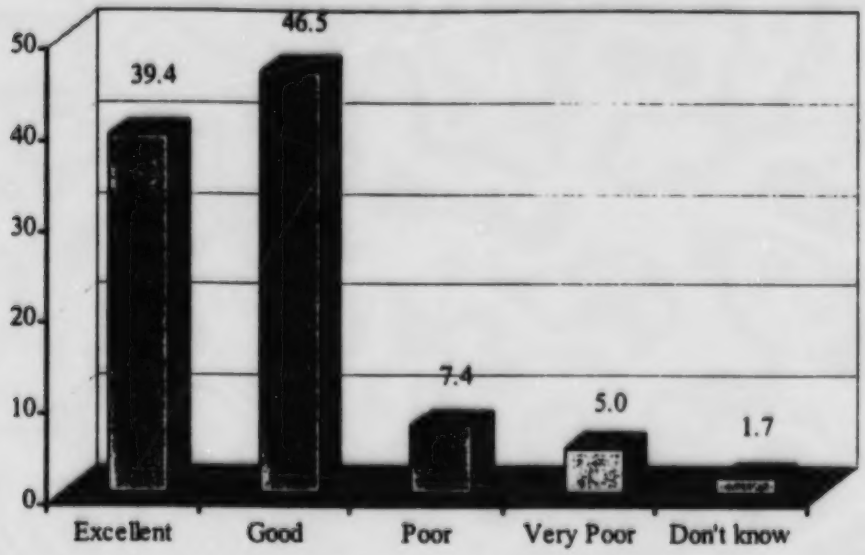
Respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 24 were significantly less likely to have provided the name of the health district they live in (58.7% compared with 78.3% overall). Respondents who had a family member working for a health care organization were more likely to have provided the name of their health district (87.9% compared with 78.1% overall). Respondents with higher incomes also tended to be able to provide the name of their health district.

Q02. During the past year, have you, or one of your family members received hospital care in the hospital that is closest to where you live?



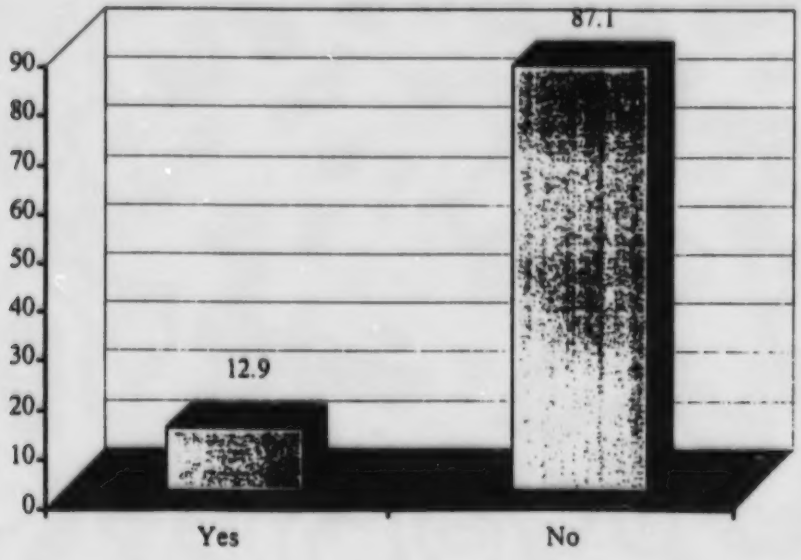
Slightly over half of the respondents (51.3%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received hospital care in the hospital that is closest to where they live during the past year.

Q03. How would you rate the quality of care that was received?



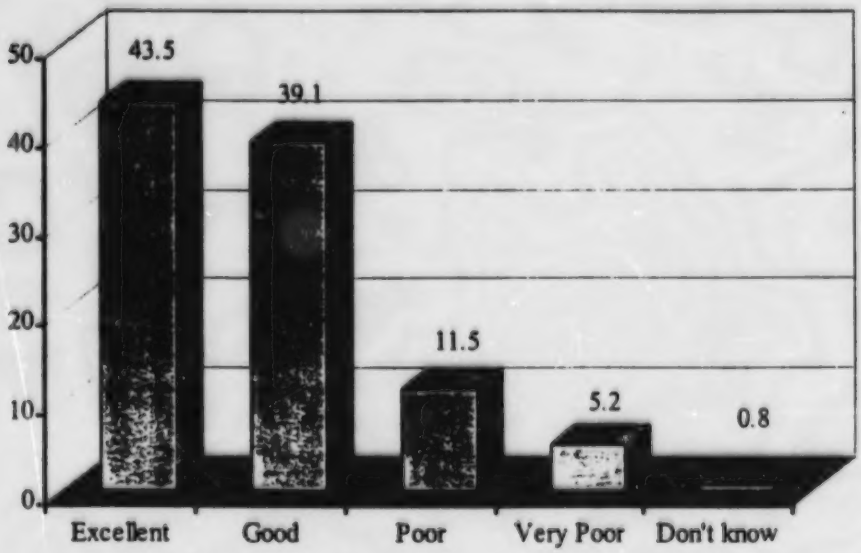
Among those who had received hospital care in the hospital that is closest to where they live during the past year, more than 85% rated the quality of care as "excellent" or "good", with nearly two-fifths (39.4%) rating the quality of care that was received "excellent", while 46.5% rated it as "good," and 12.4% rated it as "poor" or "very poor".

Q04. During the past year, have you, or one of your family members received nursing home services in Saskatchewan?



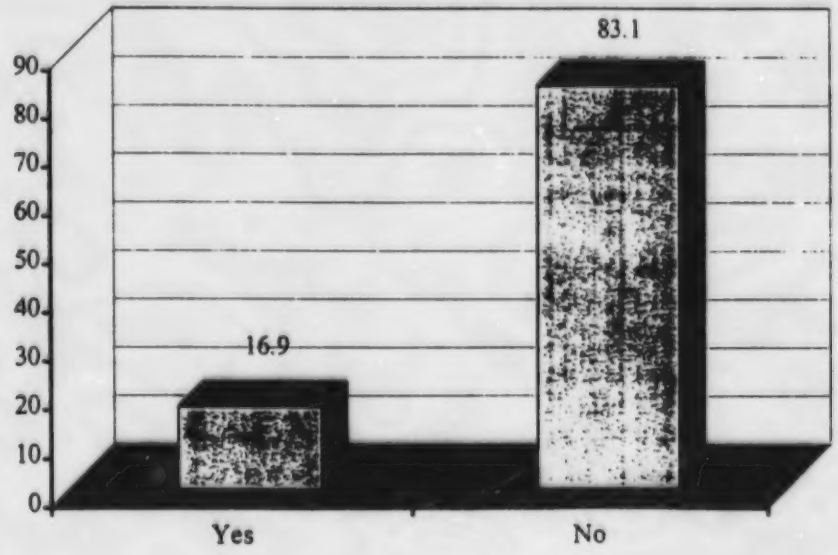
Approximately one-eighth of the respondents (12.9%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received nursing home services in Saskatchewan.

Q05. How would you rate the quality of care that was received?



Respondents who indicated that they or one of their family members had used nursing home services in Saskatchewan during the past year were asked to rate the quality of care that was received. The majority rated the quality of care as "excellent" or "good" (82.6%), while 16.7% rated it as "poor" or "very poor".

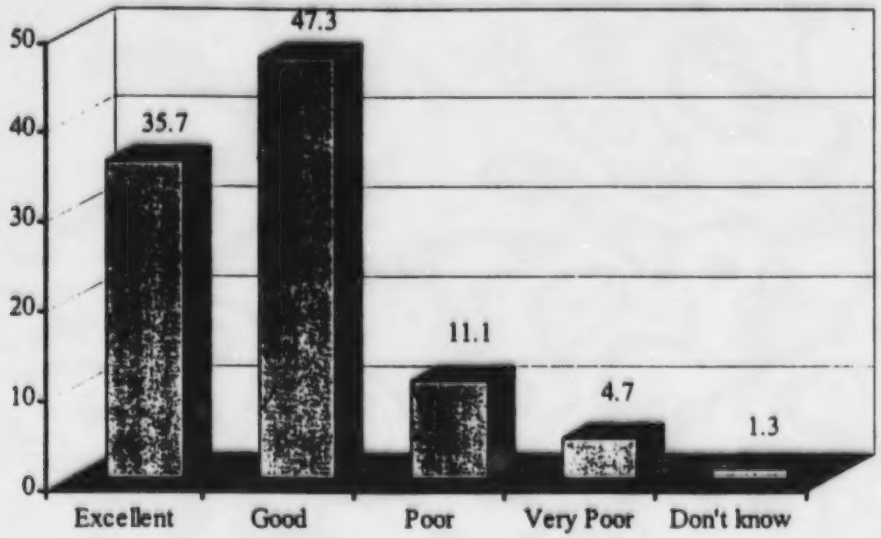
Q06. During the past year, have you, or one of your family members received home care in Saskatchewan?



Approximately one-sixth of the respondents (16.9%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received home care in Saskatchewan during the past year.

Respondents who were over 50 years of age were significantly more likely to have received home care in Saskatchewan compared with those under 50 years of age (25.5% and 11.5% respectively).

Q07. How would you rate the quality of care that was received?



Of those who or whose family members had received home care in Saskatchewan during the past year, over four-fifths (83.0%) indicated that the quality of care that was received was "excellent" or "good", while 15.8% indicated that the quality of care was "poor" or "very poor".

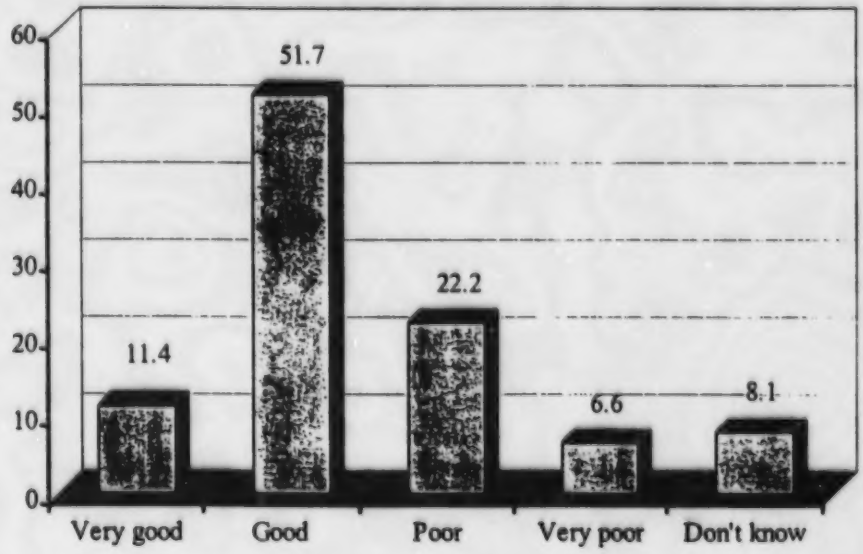
Q08. If you or a family member received hospital, nursing home or home care services that were not satisfactory, who do you think you would raise your concerns to?

Person to raise concerns to	#	%
Health district board member	122	15.1
Immediate supervisor/Service administration	113	14.0
MLA	79	9.9
Doctor	51	6.4
Minister of Health	45	5.6
Health district CEO	41	5.1
Health district quality of care co-ordinator	31	3.9
Other	41	5.2
Don't know	279	34.8
Total	**802**	**100.0**

Respondents were then asked to whom would they raise their concerns to if the services were not satisfactory. The largest proportion of the respondents (34.8%) were not sure where to raise their concerns. Over one-seventh of the respondents (15.1%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to a Health District Board member, while a similar proportion (14.0%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to the immediate supervisor or the hospital/nursing home/home care services administration or director. Approximately one-tenth of the respondents (9.9%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). A small proportion indicated that they would raise the concerns to their doctor (6.4%), the Ministry of Health (5.6%), Health District CEO (5.1%), and Health District Quality of Care Co-ordinator (3.9%). Other responses include "the government", "Saskatchewan Health Association" and "nobody". Please refer to Appendix 2 for a complete list of the other responses.

Respondents who worked for a health care organization were more likely to raise their concerns to the Health district quality of care co-ordinator than those did not work for a health care organization (18.8% and 2.3% respectively).

Q09. How good of a job do you think your health district is doing in ensuring that good quality services are delivered in your area?

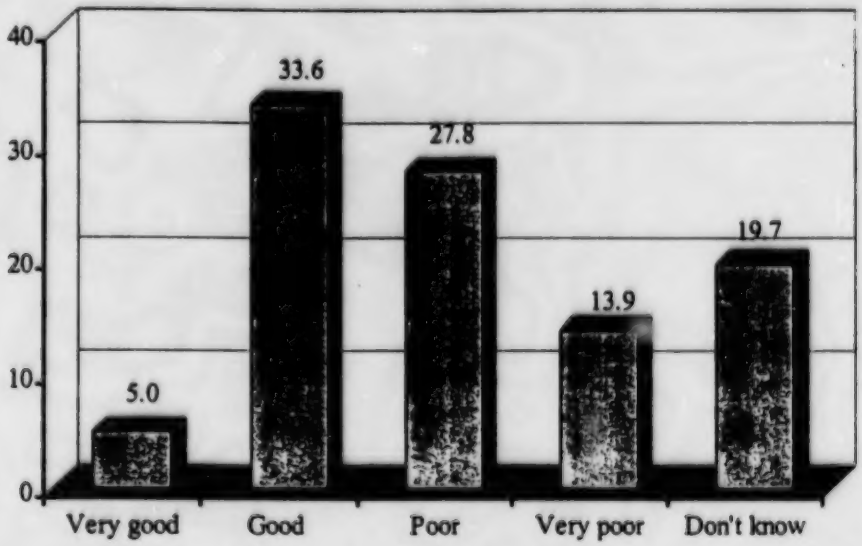


The respondents were asked to rate their health district in ensuring that good quality services are delivered in their area. The majority of the respondents rated their health district "very good" (11.4%) or "good" (51.7%), while 28.8% rated "poor" or "very poor". Approximately one in every eleven (8.1%) indicated that they did not know how good a job their health district was doing.

Respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 24 were more likely to have rated their health district "excellent" or "good" in ensuring that good quality services are delivered (84.5% vs. 63.0% overall).

Respondents who worked for a health care organization were more likely to have rated their health district "poor" or "very poor" compared with those did not work for a health care organization (47.8% and 27.2% respectively).

Q10. How good of a job do you think your health district is doing in spending tax dollars efficiently?

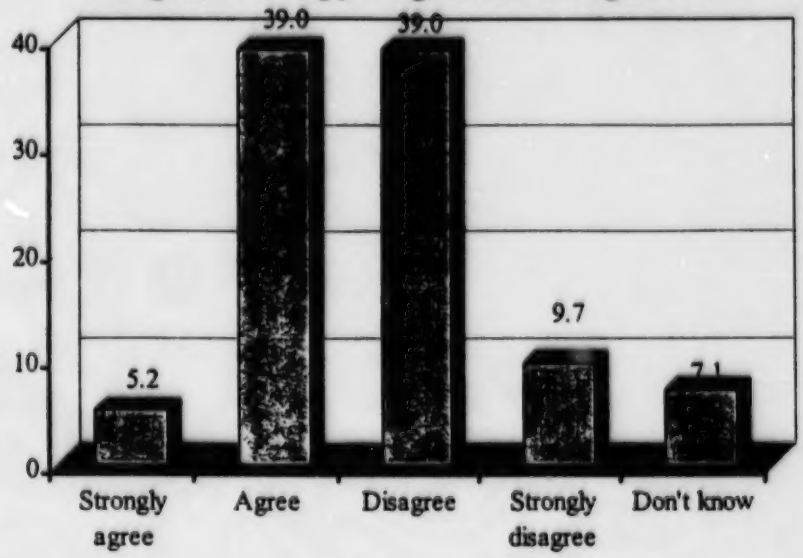


When respondents were asked to rate their health district in spending tax dollars efficiently, the ratings were significantly lower compared with the ratings of ensuring the delivery of good quality services. Less than two-fifths of the respondents rated their health district "very good" or "good" (5.0% and 33.6% respectively), while over two-fifths rated "poor" or "very poor" (27.8% and 13.9% respectively). Nearly one-fifth of the respondents (19.7%) indicated that they did not know how good a job their health district was doing in this regard.

Respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 24 were less likely to have rated their health district "poor" or "very poor" in spending tax dollars efficiently (26.3% vs. 41.7% overall).

Respondents who worked for a health care organization were more likely to have rated their health district "poor" or "very poor" in spending tax dollars efficiently (66.2% vs. 41.7% overall).

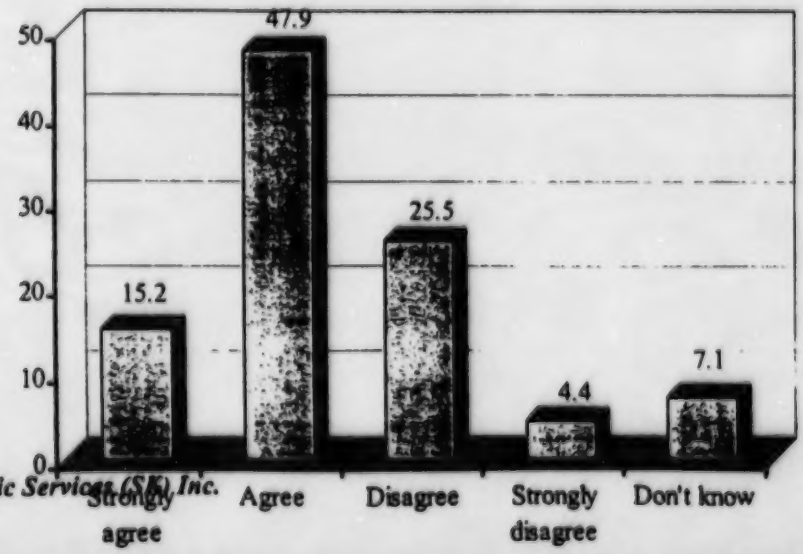
Q11. Larger health districts would allow for better planning and integration of services. That's a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?



The respondents were equally split on the argument, with a slightly higher proportion of the respondents disagreeing with the argument. The proportions of respondents who indicated "agree" and "disagree" were virtually identical (39.0%). However, 9.7% indicated that they "strongly disagree", while 5.2% "strongly agree" with the argument.

Responses to this question were negatively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the argument were more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts.

Q12. Larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same? Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?

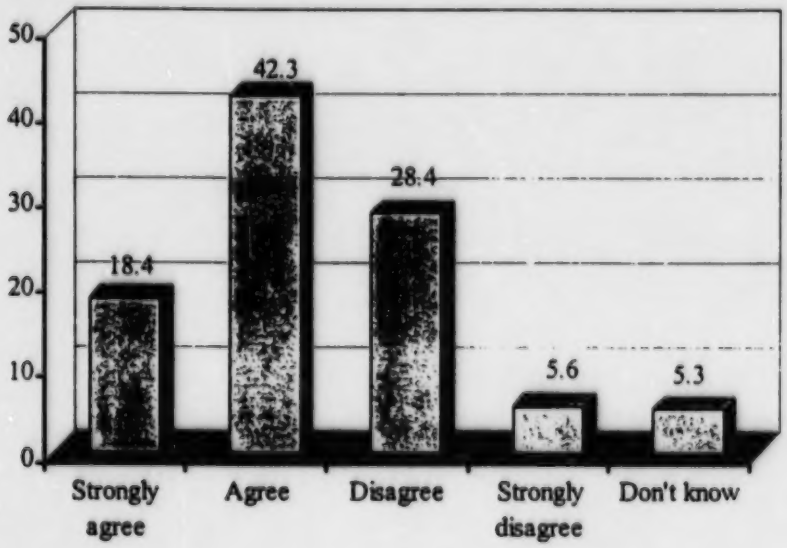


The respondents were less divided when asked if they agreed or disagreed with the argument "larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from my community". The majority of the respondents indicated that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the argument (15.2% and 47.9% respectively). While over a quarter (25.5%) indicated that they "disagree", 4.4% indicated that they "strongly disagree" with the argument.

Respondents with an annual household income of more than $40,000 were more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than those with an income of less than $40,000 (37.2% and 25.5% respectively). Male respondents were also more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than female respondents (38.1% and 26.5% respectively).

Responses to this question were positively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the argument were more likely to prefer maintaining the current number of health districts.

Q13. A reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures. That's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?

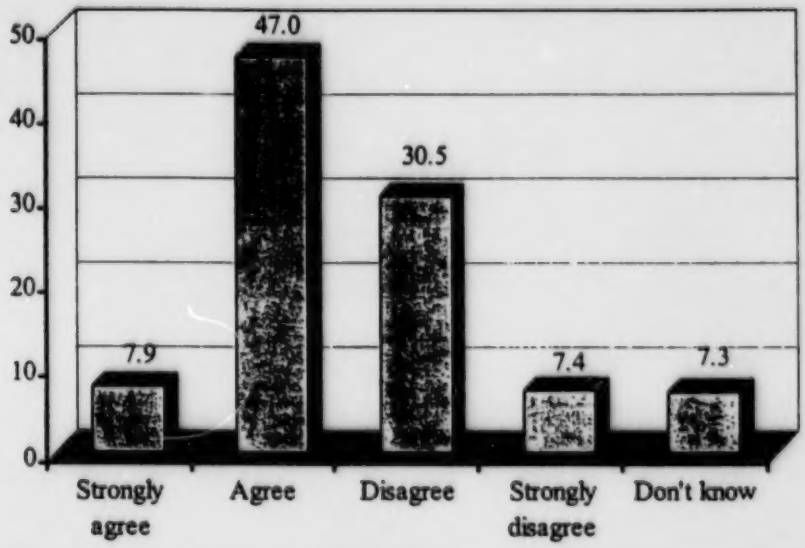


In general, the majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that a reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures (18.4% "strongly agree" and 42.3% "agree"). A total of one-third of the respondents indicated that they "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with the argument (28.4% and 5.6% respectively).

Respondents with an annual household income of more than $40,000 were more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than those with an income of less than $40,000 (40.1% and 30.4% respectively). Male respondents were also more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than female respondents (43.9% and 28.1% respectively).

Responses to this question were positively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the argument were more likely to prefer maintaining the current number of health districts.

Q14. Larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services. That's a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?

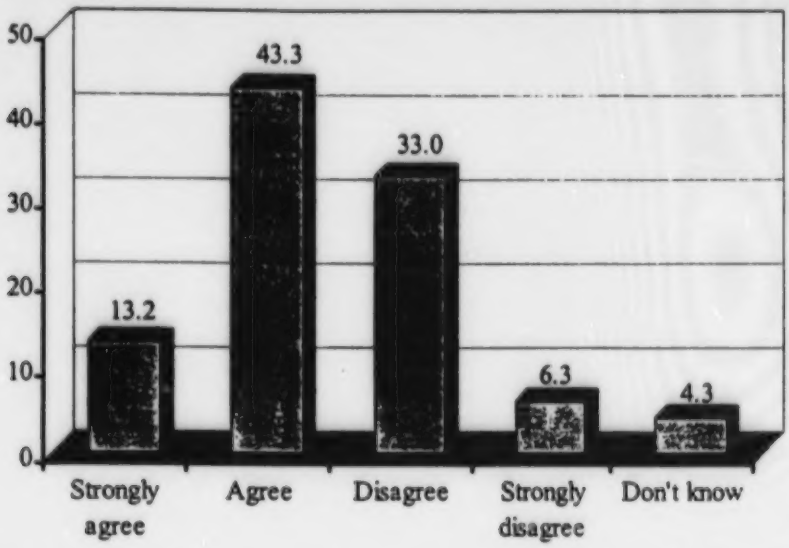


A combined total of 54.9% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services (7.9% "strongly agree" and 47.0% "agree"), while 37.9% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagree with the argument (30.5% and 7.4% respectively).

Respondents who were under the age of 24 were more likely to have indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the argument than respondents over 24 (74.6% and 56.4% respectively).

Responses to this question were negatively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the argument were more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts.

Q15. Reducing the number of health districts might lead to a loss of jobs in my community. That's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?

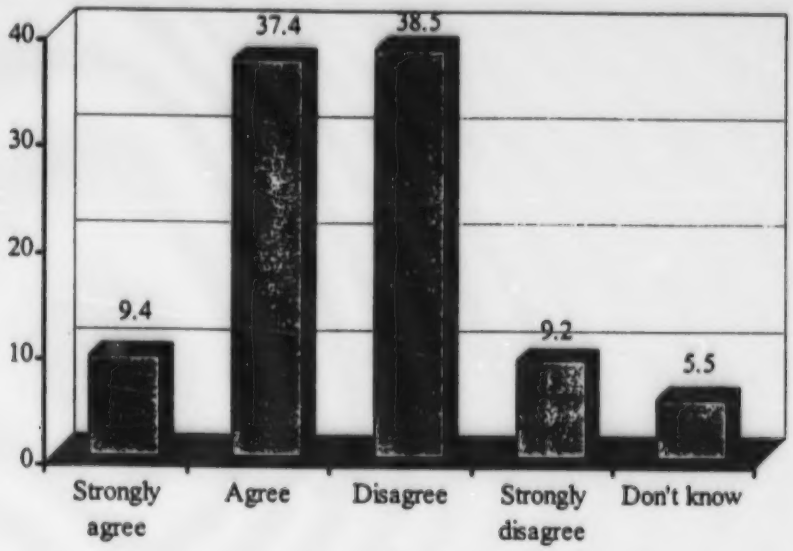


The majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "reducing the number of health districts might lead to a loss of jobs in my community" (13.2% and 43.3% respectively). While about one-third (33.0%) disagreed, 6.3% strongly disagreed with the argument.

Respondents with an annual household income of over $40,000 were more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than those with an income of under $40,000 (49.7% and 33.7% respectively). Male respondents were also more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than female respondents (48.2% and 34.1% respectively).

Responses to this question were positively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the argument were more likely to prefer maintaining the current number of health districts.

Q16. Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That's a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?

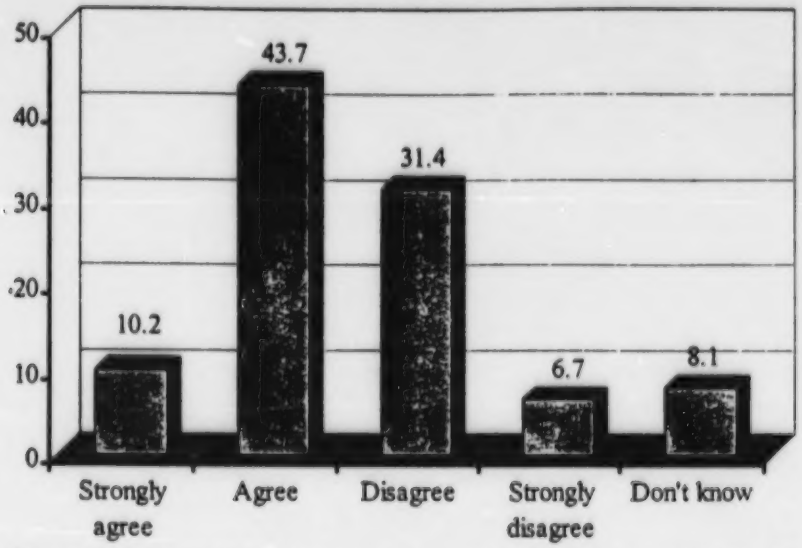


The respondents were equally split on the argument that "reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration". While 46.8% indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the argument (9.4% and 37.4%). 47.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (38.5% and 9.2% respectively).

Female respondents were more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than male respondents (54.8% and 46.0% respectively).

Responses to this question were negatively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the argument were more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts.

Q17. Changing health district boundaries would disrupt our health care system. That's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?

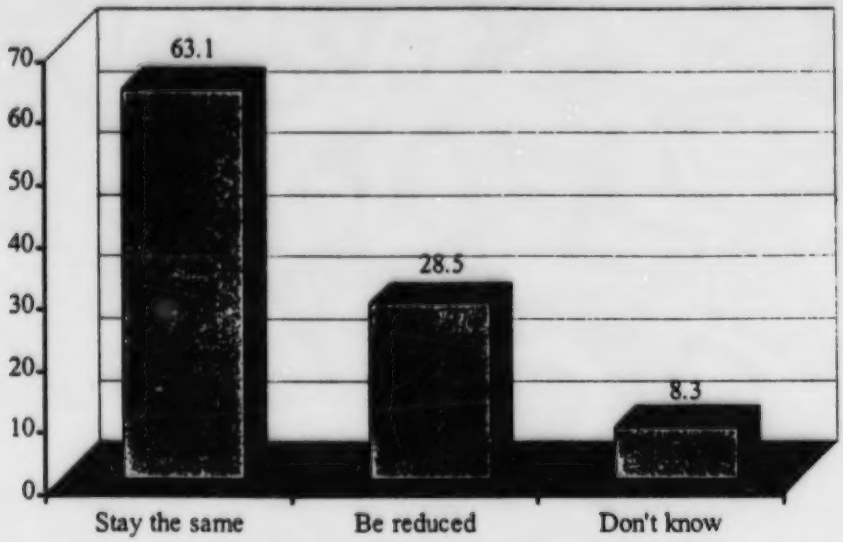


The majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "changing health district boundaries would disrupt our health care system, and that's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same" (10.2% and 43.7% respectively). A combined total of 38.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument, and 8.1% were undecided.

Respondents with an annual household income of more than $40,000 were more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than those with an income of less than $40,000 (47.7% and 33.7% respectively). Male respondents were also more likely to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument than female respondents (46.3% and 36.7% respectively).

Responses to this question were positively correlated to the preference between maintaining the current number of health district and reducing the number, which means respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the argument were more likely to prefer maintaining the current number of health districts.

Q18. On balance, do you believe that the number of health districts should stay the same or be reduced?



The majority of the respondents were in favour of maintaining the same number and size of current health districts, with 63.1% indicating that the number of health districts should stay the same and 28.5% indicating the number should be reduced. Less than one-eleventh of the respondents (8.3%) were undecided.

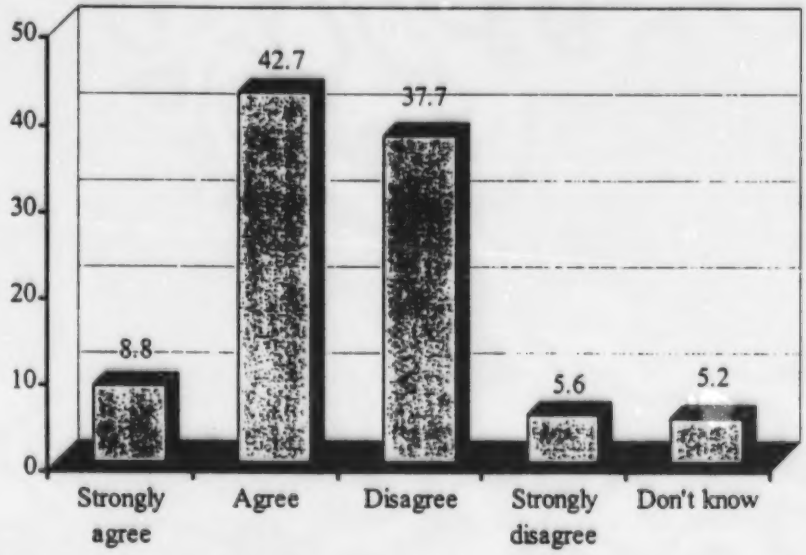
Respondents who were over 35 were slightly more likely to be in favour of reducing the number of health districts than respondents under 35 (30.4% and 23.3% respectively). Respondents who had an annual household income of less than $40,000 were more likely to prefer maintaining current number of health districts than those with an income of more than $40,000 (75.8%, and 60.1% respectively). Female respondents were also more likely to prefer maintaining current number of health districts than males (75.0% and 62.6% respectively). Respondents who lived in Saskatoon or Regina health districts were more likely to be in favour of reducing the number of health districts than respondents who lived in other health districts (36.7% and 20.9% respectively).

While the preference between maintaining and reducing the number of health districts was correlated to the responses to all arguments, the arguments could be ranked as follows based on their strength of correlation with the preference, from the strongest to the weakest:

- Changing health district boundaries would disrupt our health care system. That's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same;
- Larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of the districts the same;
- Reducing the number of health districts might lead to loss of jobs in my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same;

- A reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of the districts the same;
- Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts;
- Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That's a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts;
- Larger health districts would allow for better planning and integration of services. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts; and
- Larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts.

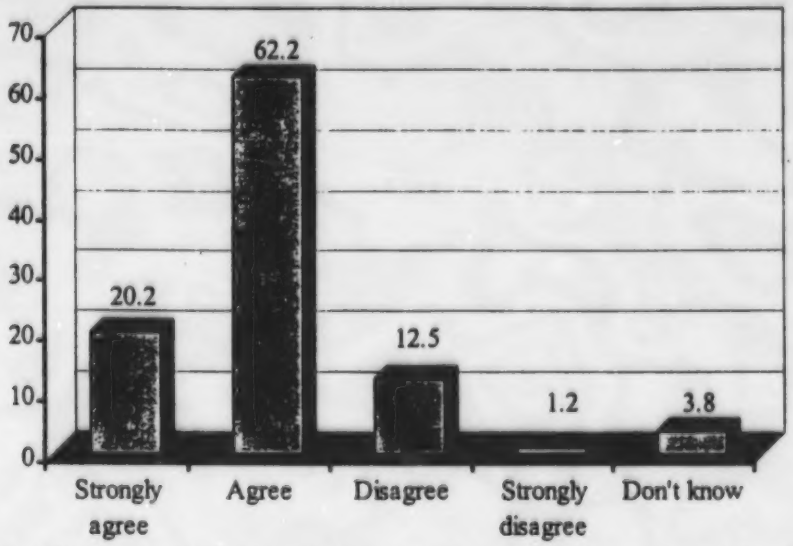
Q19. We need to have the most experienced and qualified people running the health care system. That's a good reason to go to appointed boards. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?



Slightly over half of the respondents (51.5%) indicated that a good reason to go to appointed boards is that we need to have the most experienced and qualified people running the health care system. A combined total of 43.3% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument (37.7% and 5.6% respectively).

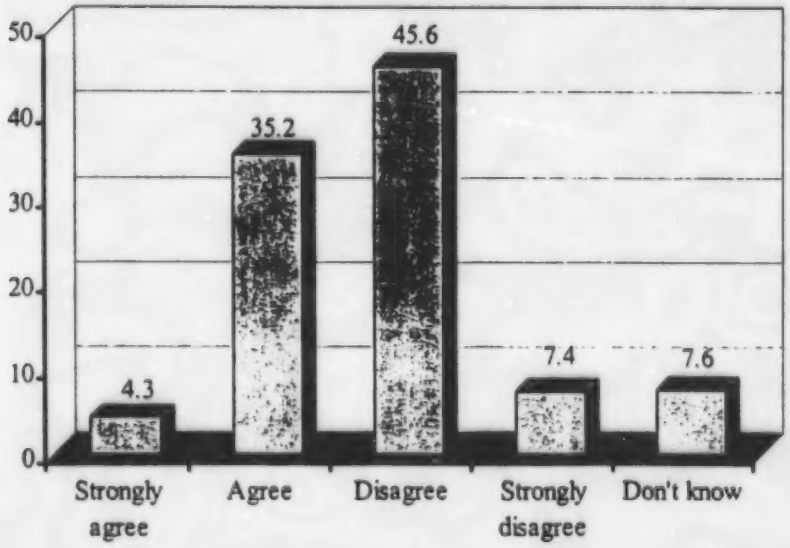
Respondents who were under the age of 35 were less likely than those over 35 to have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument (28.2% and 51.6% respectively).

Q20. Being able to vote is how I can make sure my voice is heard. That's a good reason to have elected health district boards. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?



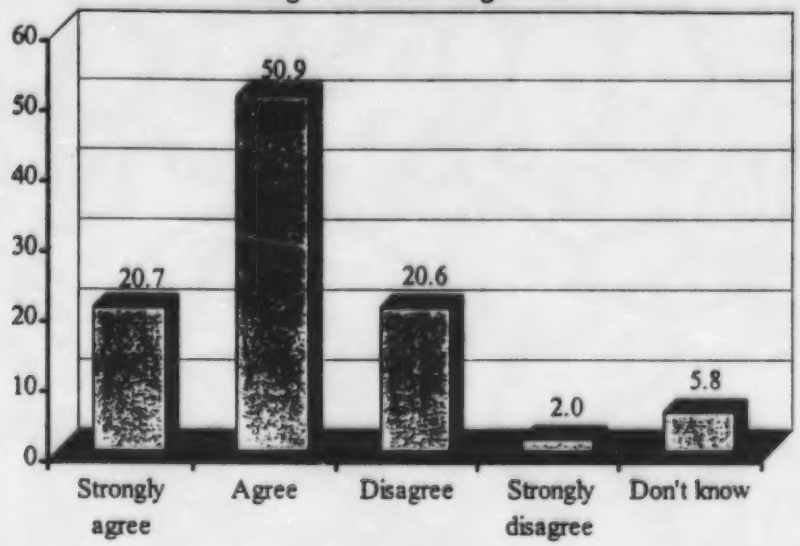
The vast majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "being able to vote is how I can make sure my voice is heard" (20.2% and 62.2% respectively). Only 13.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument (12.5% and 1.2% respectively).

Q21. Because health district boards do not have to raise money themselves through taxation, elected board members will spend too much money in order to try to win re-election. That's a good reason to go to appointed boards. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?



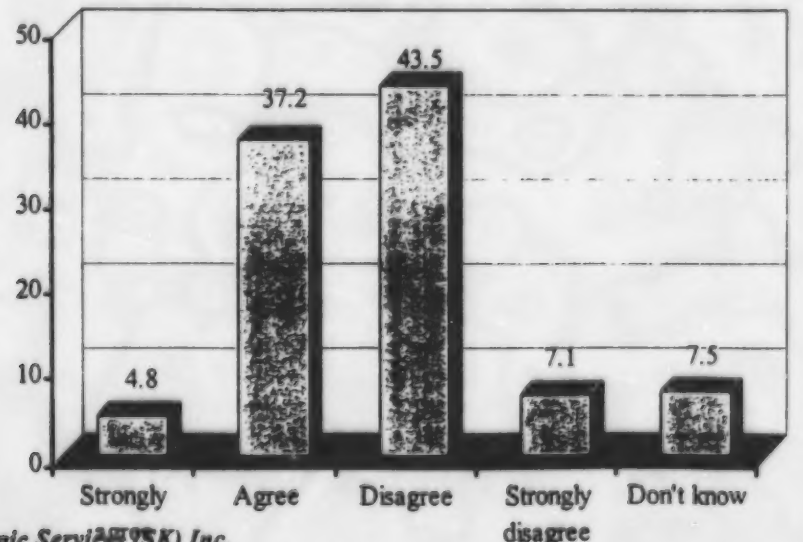
Less than two-fifths of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that a good reason to go to appointed boards is to avoid elected board members to spend too much money to try to win re-election (4.3% and 35.2% respectively). However, slightly over half of the respondents (53.0%) did not believe that it is a good argument to go to appointed boards.

Q22. If boards are appointed, the government will just appoint its own friends. That's a good reason to have elected boards. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument



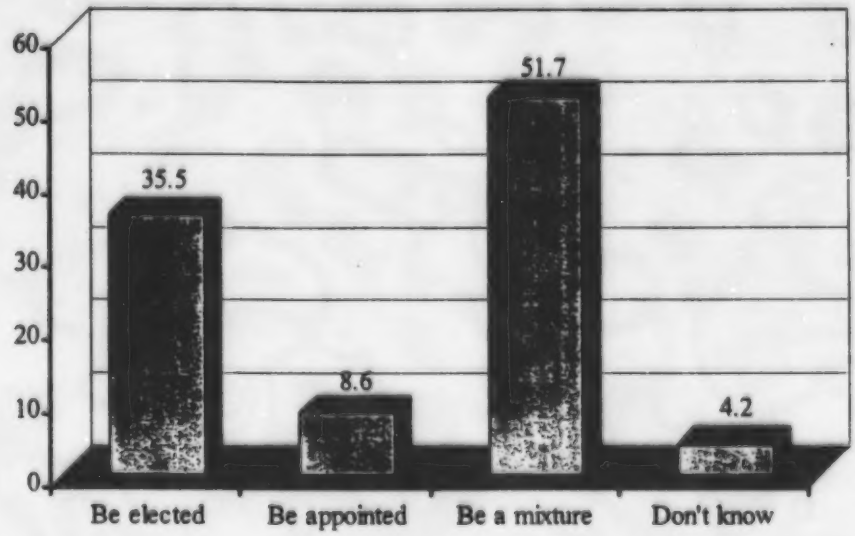
Over 70% of the respondents indicated that a good reason to have elected boards is to avoid the government appointing its own friends (20.7% "strongly agree" and 50.9% "agree"). A total of 22.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument (20.6% and 2.0% respectively).

Q23. If the government appointed health district board members, it will not be able to blame anyone else when things go wrong or when an unpopular decision is made. That's a good reason to have appointed boards. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the Argument?



A total of 42.0% strongly agreed or agreed with the argument, while 50.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Respondents who had an annual household income of less than $40,000 were more likely to have strongly agreed or agreed with the argument than respondents with an income.of over $40,000 (52.8% and 38.5% respectively).

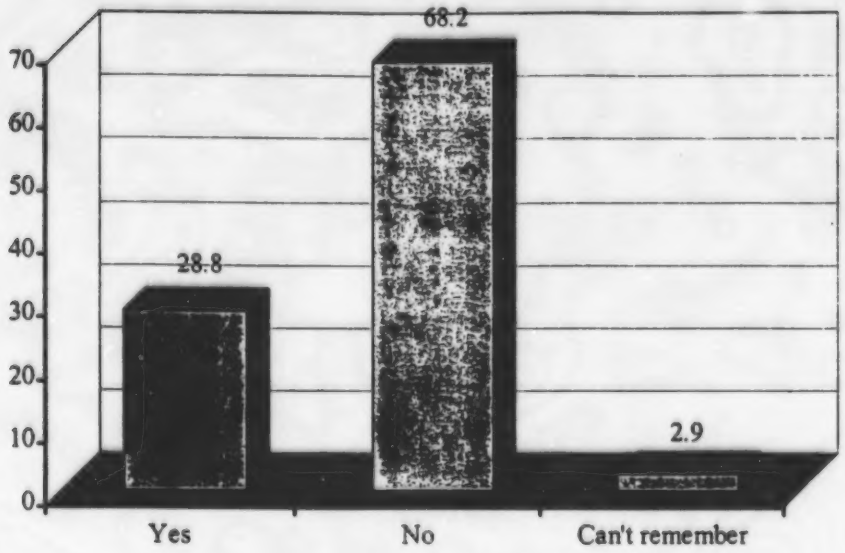
Q24. On balance, I think that the health boards should...



The majority of the respondents (51.7%) indicated that the health boards should be a mixture of elected and appointed members. The second largest proportion of the respondents (35.5%) indicated that they preferred elected boards. Even though a significant proportion of respondents indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the arguments that health board members should be appointed, only over one-twelfth of the respondents (8.6%) were in favour of appointed boards.

Respondents who were over 35 were slightly more likely to be in favour of elected board than those under 35 (37.3% and 30.3% respectively).

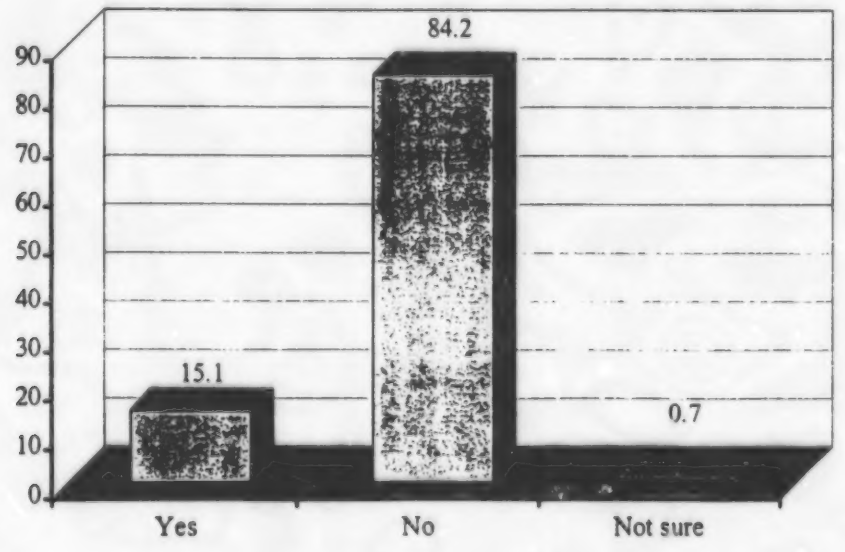
Q25. Have you ever voted in a health district election?



Over two-thirds of the respondents (68.2%) indicated that they had never voted in a health district election, while 28.8% indicated that they had voted.

Respondents over 35 were more likely to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election than those under 35 (32.8% and 17.1% respectively). Respondents who worked for a health care organization were more than twice as likely than other respondents to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election (58.0% and 26.1% respectively).

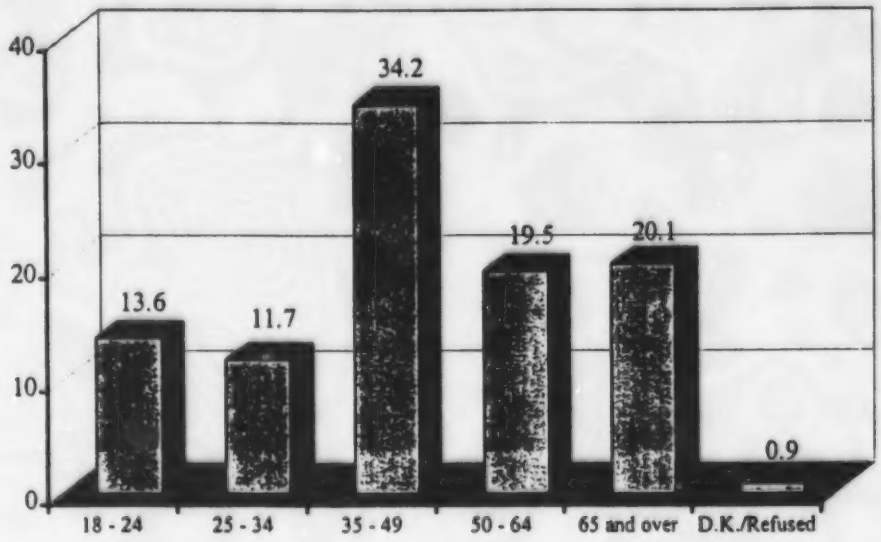
Q26. Have you ever raised a concern with your health district board member?



The vast majority of the respondents (84.2%) indicated that they had never raised a concern with their health district board member, while 15.1% indicated that they had done so.

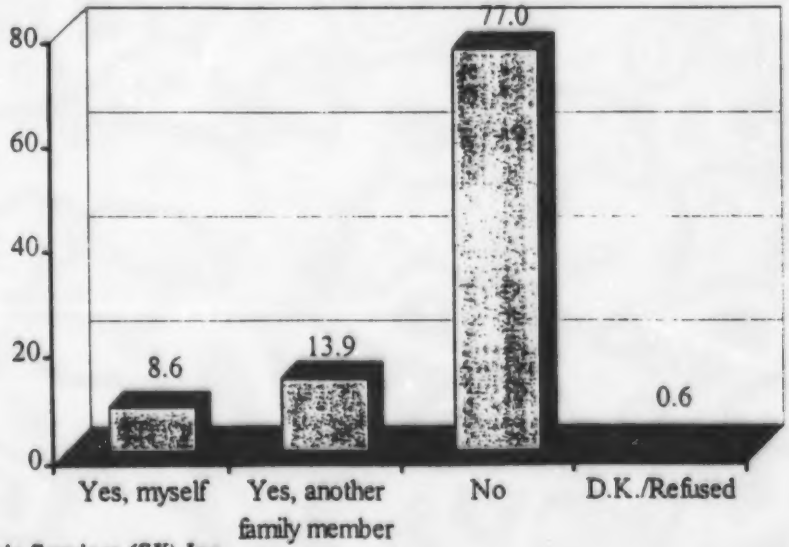
Respondents who worked for a health care organization were significantly more likely to have indicated that they had raised concerns with a health district board member (37.7% vs. 15.1% - overall).

Age



The survey results were weighted by age in order to ensure the representativeness of the sample. The largest proportion of the respondents (34.2%) were between the ages of 35 – 49, followed by those over 64 (20.1%) and between the ages of 50 – 64 (19.5%). Respondents between the ages of 18 – 24 accounted for 13.6%, and those between 25 – 34 accounted for 11.7%. Less than 1.0% of the respondents refused to response to the question.

Work in health care



Over one-fifth of the respondents (22.5%) indicated that they or one of their family members worked for a health care organization.

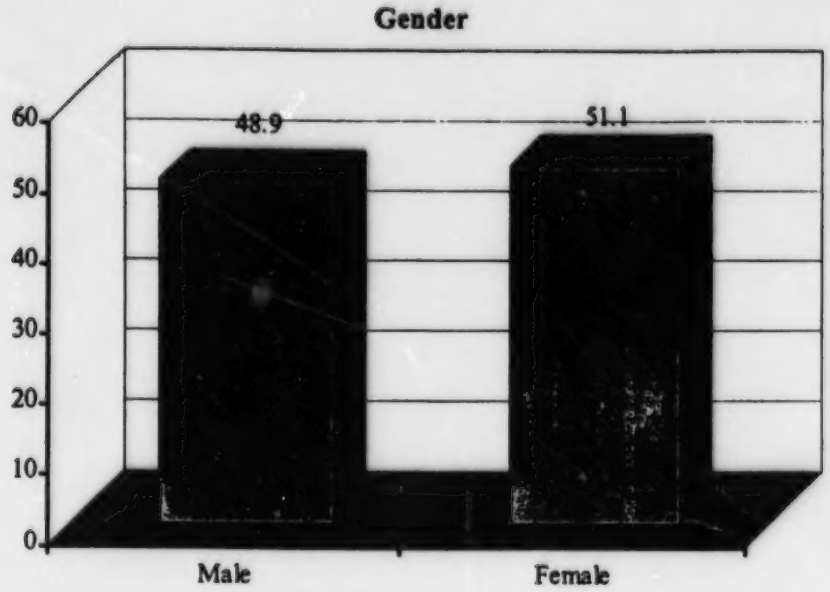
Q21. Income

Annual Household Income	#	%
< $20,000	117	14.6
$20,000 - $39,000	190	23.7
$40,000 - $59,000	164	20.5
$60,000 - $79,000	69	8.6
$80,000 - $99,000	37	4.6
> $100,000	45	5.6
Don't know/refused	179	22.4
Total	802	100.0

The largest proportion of the respondents indicated that they had an annual household income of between $20,000 - $39,000 (23.7%), followed by those whose annual household income was between $40,000 - $59,000 (20.5%). Respondents who had an income of less than $20,000 accounted for 14.6%, respondents with an annual household income of between $60,000 - $79,000 accounted for 8.6%, and respondents with an income of between $80,000 and $99,000 accounted for 4.6%. Approximately one-eighteenth of the respondents indicated that they had an annual household income of over $100,000. Over one-fifth of the respondents (22.4%) refused to response to the question.

Health district

Health district	#	%
South East	36	4.5
South Central	16	2.0
South Country	7	0.9
Rolling Hills	11	1.4
South West	9	1.1
Moose Mountain	12	1.5
Pipestone	10	1.3
Regina	186	23.2
Moose Jaw – Thunder Creek	22	2.7
Swift Current	7	0.9
North Valley	16	2.0
Touchwood Qu'Appelle	9	1.1
East Central	22	2.7
Living Sky	12	1.5
Midwest	17	2.1
Prairie West	18	2.3
Assiniboine Valley	9	1.1
Central Plains	10	1.2
Saskatoon	201	25.0
Greenhead	9	1.1
Pasquia	18	2.3
North Central	5	0.7
Gabriel Springs	7	0.9
North East	17	2.1
Prince Albert	17	2.1
Parkland	19	2.4
Battlefords	17	2.1
Twin Rivers	15	1.8
Lloydminster	22	2.7
Northwest	8	1.0
Mamawetan/Muinto Uskiy	3	0.3
Keewatin	6	0.8
Athabasca	9	1.1
Total	802	100.0



The survey results were weighted by gender to ensure the representativeness of the sample. Slightly over half of the respondents (51.1%) were female, and 48.9% were male.

4.0 MAJOR FINDINGS

Overall experience and ratings of health care services in Saskatchewan

- The majority of the respondents (78.2%) were able to provide the name of the health district they live in.

- Slightly over half of the respondents (51.3%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received hospital care in the hospital that is closest to where they live during the past year. More than 85% of them rated the quality of care as "excellent" or "good".

- Approximately one-eighth of the respondents (12.9%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received nursing home services in Saskatchewan. The majority of them rated the quality of care as "excellent" or "good" (82.6%), while 16.7% rated it as "poor" or "very poor".

- Approximately one-sixth of the respondents (16.9%) indicated that they or one of their family members had received home care in Saskatchewan during the past year. Over four-fifths of them (83.0%) indicated that the quality of care that was received was "excellent" or "good", while 15.8% indicated that the quality of care was "poor" or "very poor".

- When asked to whom would they raise their concerns to if the services were not satisfactory, the largest proportion of the respondents (34.8%) were not sure where to raise their concerns. Over one-seventh of the respondents (15.1%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to a health district board member, while a similar proportion (14.0%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to the immediate supervisor or the hospital/nursing home/home care services administration or director. Approximately one-tenth of the respondents (9.9%) indicated that they would raise their concerns to a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA).

- When asked to rate their health district in ensuring that good quality services are delivered in their area, the majority of the respondents rated their health district "very good" (11.4%) or "good" (51.7%), while 28.8% rated "poor" or "very poor". Approximately one in every eleven (8.1%) indicated that they did not know how good a job their health district was doing.

- When asked to rate their health district in spending tax dollars efficiently, the ratings were significantly lower compared with the ratings of ensuring the delivery of good quality services. Less than two-fifths of the respondents rated their health district "very good" or "good" (5.0% and 33.6% respectively). Nearly one-fifth of the respondents (19.7%) indicated that they did not know how good a job their health district was doing in this regard.

- The vast majority of the respondents (84.2%) indicated that they had never raised a concern with their health district board member, while 15.1% indicated that they had done so. Respondents who worked for a health care organization were significantly more likely to have indicated that they had raised concerns with a health district board member (37.7% vs. 15.1% overall).

Preference between maintaining or reducing the number of health districts

- The majority of the respondents were in favour of maintaining the same number and size of current health districts, with 63.1% indicating that the number of health districts should stay the same and 28.5% indicating the number should be reduced. Less than one-eleventh of the respondents (8.3%) were undecided.

- Respondents who were over 35 were slightly more likely to be in favour of reducing the number of health districts than respondents under 35 (30.4% and 23.3% respectively). Respondents who had an annual household income of more than $40,000 were more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts than those with an income of less than $40,000 (39.9%, and 24.2% respectively). Male respondents were also more likely to prefer reducing the number of health districts than females (37.4% and 25.0% respectively).

- No significant correlation was found between whether or not respondents had voted in health district elections and their preference.

- While the preference between maintaining and reducing the number of health districts was correlated to the responses to all arguments, the arguments could be ranked as follows based on their strength of correlation with the preference, from the strongest to the weakest:

    - Changing health district boundaries would disrupt our health care system. That's a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same;
    - Larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of the districts the same;
    - Reducing the number of health districts might lead to loss of jobs in my community. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of districts the same;
    - A reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures. That is a good reason to keep the number and size of the districts the same;
    - Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts;
    - Reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration. That's a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts;
    - Larger health districts would allow for better planning and integration of services. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts; and
    - Larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services. That is a good reason to have fewer, but larger, districts.

- When the respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the argument that larger health district would allow for better planning and integration of services, the responses were equally split, with a slightly higher proportion of the respondents disagreeing with the argument.

- When the respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the argument that larger health districts would lead to a loss of input from their communities, The respondents were less divided. The majority of the respondents indicated that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the argument (15.2% and 47.9% respectively).

- The majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that a reduction in the number of health districts would lead to more hospital closures (18.4% "strongly agree" and 42.3% "agree").

- A combined total of 54.9% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that larger health districts would allow districts to hire specialists and purchase equipment needed to offer a wider range of services (7.9% "strongly agree" and 47.0% "agree").

- The majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "reducing the number of health districts might lead to a loss of jobs in my community" (13.2% and 43.3% respectively).

- The respondents were equally split on the argument that "reducing the number of health districts would mean more efficient operations and save money on administration". While 46.8% indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the argument (9.4% and 37.4%), 47.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (38.5% and 9.2% respectively).

Preference between elected or appointed board members

- Over two-thirds of the respondents (68.2%) indicated that they had never voted in a health district election, while 28.8% indicated that they had voted. Respondents who were under the age of 25 were less likely to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election than respondents who were over 25 (10.1% and 32.0% respectively). Respondents who worked for a health care organization were more than twice as likely than other respondents to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election (58.0% and 26.1% respectively).

- The majority of the respondents (51.7%) indicated that the health boards should be a mixture of elected and appointed members. The second largest proportion of the respondents (35.5%) indicated that they preferred elected boards. Even though a significant proportion of respondents indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the arguments that health board members should be appointed, only slightly more than one-twelfth of the respondents (8.6%) were in favour of appointed boards only.

- Respondents who were over 35 were slightly more likely to be in favour of elected board than those under 35 (37.3% and 30.3% respectively). Respondents over 35 were also more likely to have indicated that they had voted in a health district election than those under 35 (32.8% and 17.1% respectively).

- Slightly over half of the respondents (51.5%) indicated that a good reason to go to appointed boards is that we need to have the most experienced and qualified people running the health care system.

- Not withstanding the fact that 68.2% of the respondents indicated that they had never voted in a health district election, the vast majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the argument that "being able to vote is how I can make sure my voice is heard" (20.2% and 62.2% respectively).

- Less than two-fifths of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that a good reason to go to appointed boards is to avoid elected board members to spend too much money to try to win re-election (4.3% and 35.2% respectively).

- Over 70% of the respondents indicated that a good reason to have elected boards is to avoid the government appointing its own friends (20.7% "strongly agree" and 50.9% "agree").

- A total of 50.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the argument that if the government appointed health district board members, it will not be able to blame anyone else when things go wrong or when an unpopular decision is made. Respondents who had an annual household income of less than $40,000 were more likely to have strongly agreed or agreed with the argument than respondents with an income of over $40,000 (52.8% and 38.5% respectively).

Appendix Two

"Other" Survey Response

Q8. Other persons to raise concerns to

- With the person providing the service.
- With the person I am dealing with
- With Home Care people; with Hospital Doctors; Department of Health.
- With Home Care I would go to the person I had talked with.
- Whoever is responsible for that particular care here in Moosomin.
- To the person who didn't satisfy the need.
- There is nothing to do cutting down on health care. What is the point?
- There is nobody to raise them with.
- The place concerned
- The person who was not doing their job.
- The government
- The government
- The government
- Social worker
- Social Services
- Saskatchewan Health Association
- Politician. But it won't help - they are hard of hearing.
- Person delivering the services.
- People directly involved in the delivery of those unsatisfactory services.
- Other family members
- Nobody.
- Nobody because it does not seem to help since they do not listen.
- No one, they are very defensive. You can see by their reaction your concerns are not registering
- My wife!!! I am a typical Canadian and probably wouldn't say anything to anyone.
- My roommate's mom who is a nurse.
- Media.
- Lawyer
- It does not matter, it is like pissing against the wind anyway.
- Individuals providing the care.
- I wouldn't complain to anybody.
- I wouldn't complain
- I would start with the home workers and then go to the Minister of Health.
- I would not go to anyone what good would it do.
- I don't think that there is a proper sounding board in place for this purpose.
- Home Care Board
- Home Care Board
- Health concerning the Pension Cheques
- Depend on the agency.
- Client representative of the district.
- Answered survey that was in the paper.

Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Executive Council

Date:	**March, 2000**
Supplier:	**Anderson/Fast & Associates, Saskatoon**
Cost:	**$15,800**

Omnibus
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

Saskatchewan Executive Council
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Regina, Saskatchewan
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March 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Federal issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, federal taxes, agriculture, the economy and jobs and unemployment.

- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include agriculture, health care, provincial taxes, and jobs and unemployment.

- The vast majority of residents approve of changes the government is making to the justice system, including the way the government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program", targeted funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department, and the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes.

- More than one third of residents think the provincial economy will get better over the next 10 years and one half think they will be better off 5 years from now.

- Three quarters of Saskatchewan residents agree with the province's decision to participate financially in the recent federal-provincial announcement to assist farmers; more than one quarter think the province's commitment is about right.

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents are aware that an independent panel has been established to look into rate increase requests from utilities.

METHODOLOGY

Anderson/Fast & Associates was retained by the Government of Saskatchewan to conduct the March 2000 public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The March Omnibus Survey contains questions designed to explore public opinion regarding:

- federal issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- provincial issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- the justice system;
- the economy;
- agriculture; and
- the rate review panel.

The questions for the survey were provided by Saskatchewan Executive Council and assembled into an interview format by Anderson/Fast. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 1,000 households throughout Saskatchewan. To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

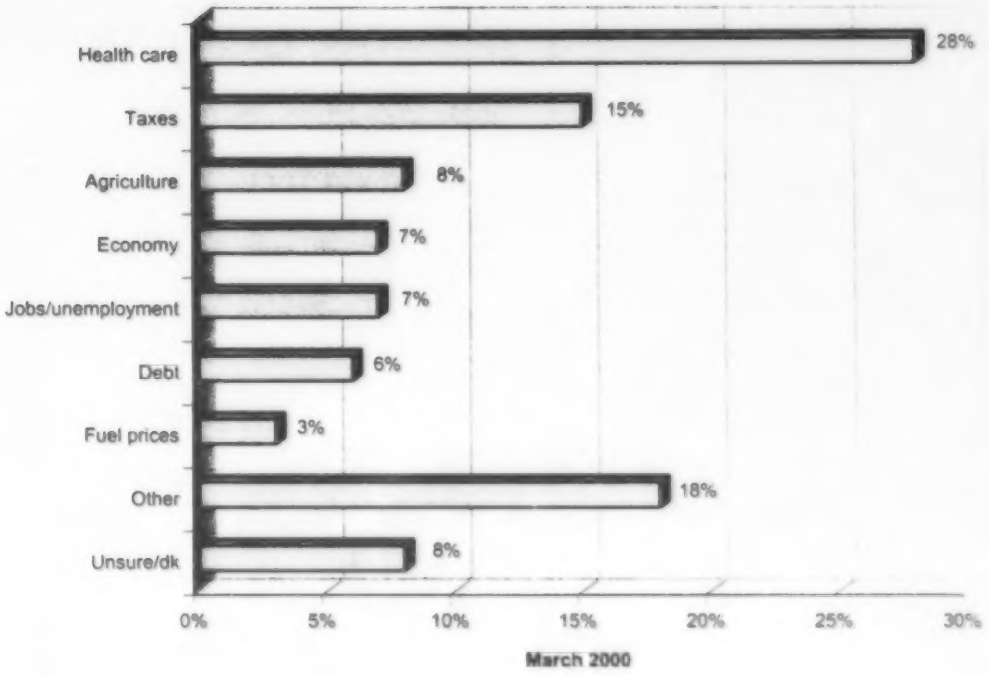
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed over a nine day period between Monday, March 6 and Tuesday, March 14, 2000. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Anderson/Fast's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

The Omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points: reliable results with low variability. Frequency charts for all public opinion issues are illustrated in this report.

Anderson/Fast designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. We also conducted statistical tests on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

1.0 GENERAL ISSUES

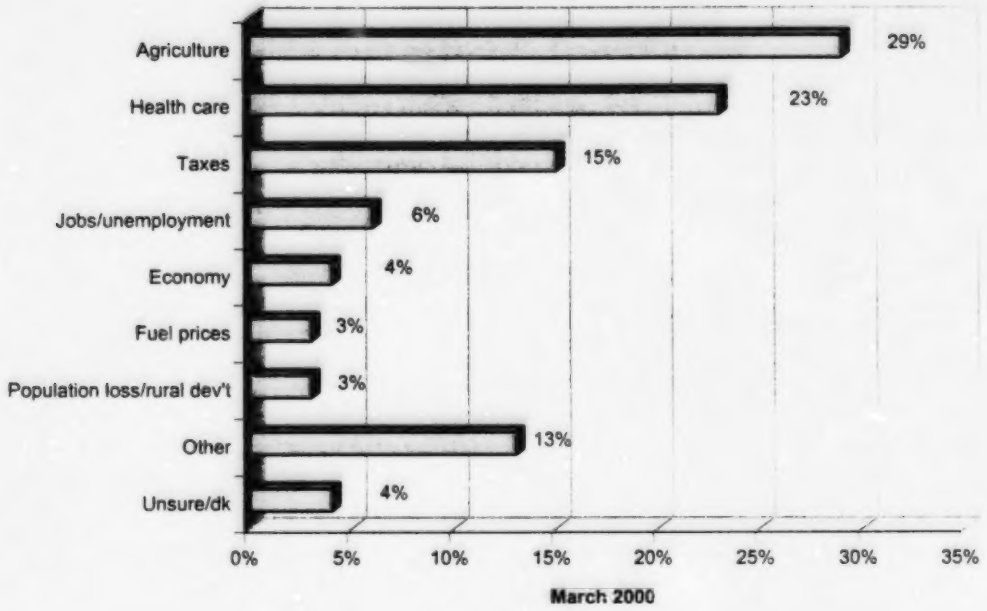
Question 1. In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Canada today?



- According to 28% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include federal taxes (15%), agriculture (8%), the economy (7%), jobs and unemployment (7%), the national deficit and accumulated debt (6%), and fuel prices (3%).

- Approximately 18% of respondents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (4%), moral, social and religious issues (2%), crime and poverty (2%) and national unity (2%).

Question 2. What do you think is the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today?

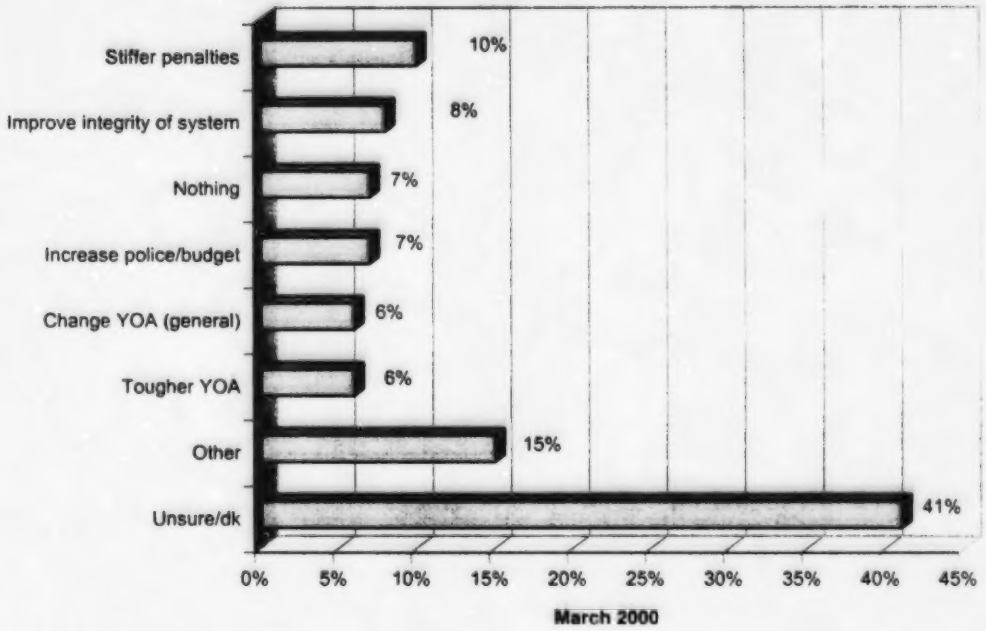


- The most important issue facing the province today, according to 29% of Saskatchewan residents, is agriculture. Approximately 23% of residents are concerned primarily with health care, 15% primarily with taxes, 6% with jobs and unemployment, 4% of respondents are primarily concerned with the provincial economy, 3% mention fuel prices and another 3% with population loss and rural development.

- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 13% of respondents are the provincial government in general (2%), the accumulated provincial debt (2%), education (2%) and Native issues (1%).

2.0 JUSTICE

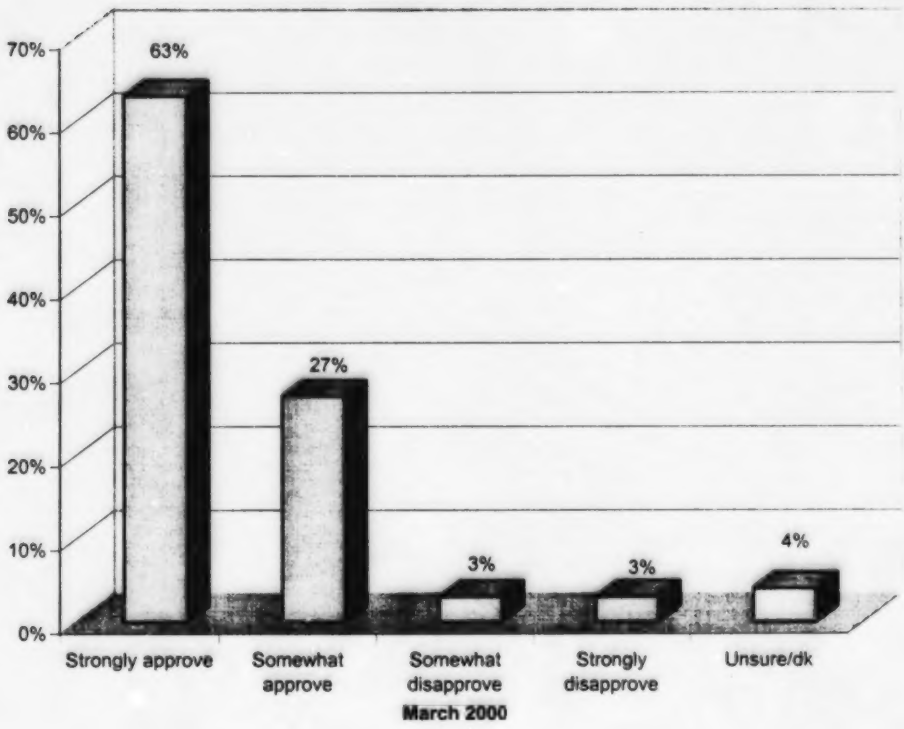
Question 3. What would you like to see changed about the way Saskatchewan's government manages policing and the justice system?



- Approximately 10% of Saskatchewan residents would like stiffer penalties for offenders and 8% mention improving the integrity of the justice system.
- About 15% of respondents mention 'other' changes they would like to see in the justice system, such as address Native issues (2%), increase community communication (1%) and improve prevention programs (1%).

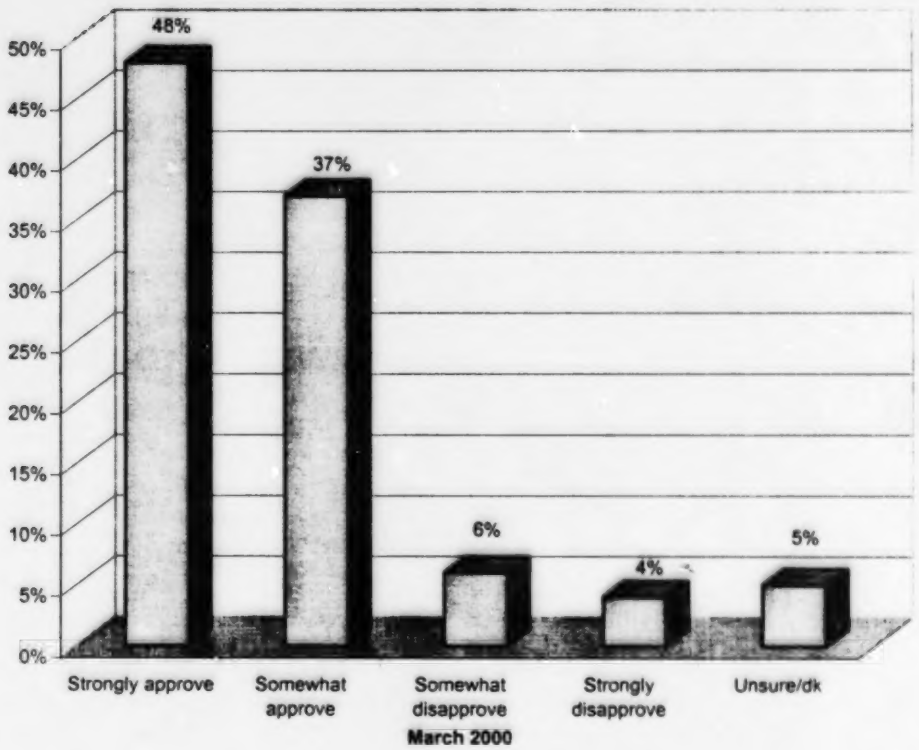
I am going to outline some of the changes the government is making to the justice system. I'd like you to tell me if you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the following initiatives:

Question 4a. The government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program". It's a partnership between police and prosecutors aimed at identifying the minority of young offenders who commit most of the crimes, tracking them, and getting them off the streets.



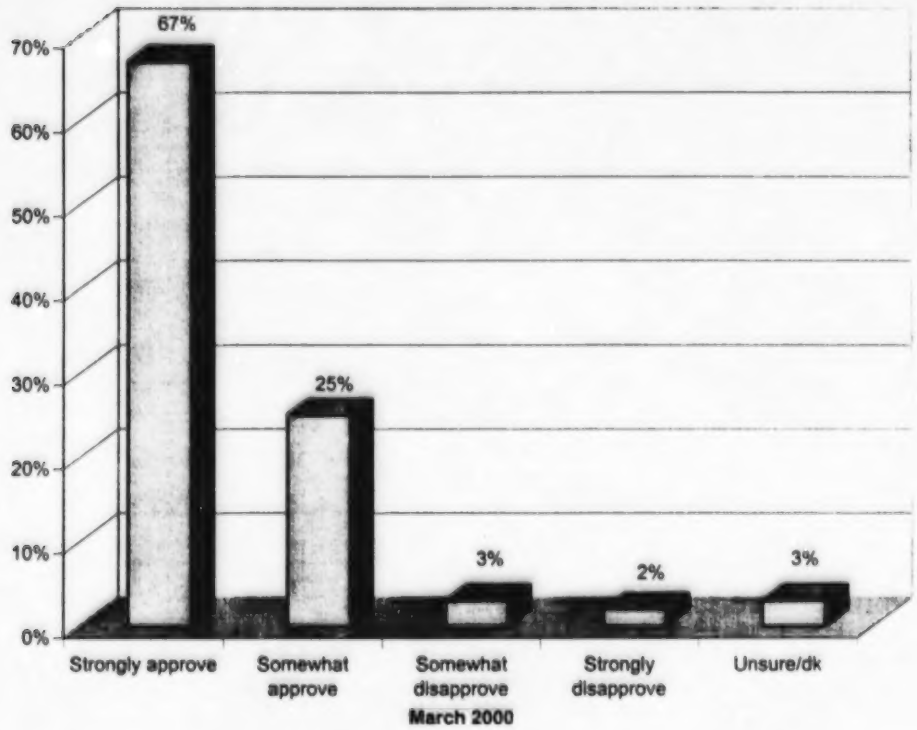
- The vast majority (90%) of residents approve of targeting funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program".

Question 4b. The government has targeted funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department by hiring more prosecutors and support staff so that trials take place more quickly, and prosecutors have more time to work on individual cases.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (85%) approve of targeting funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice system by hiring more prosecutors and support staff.

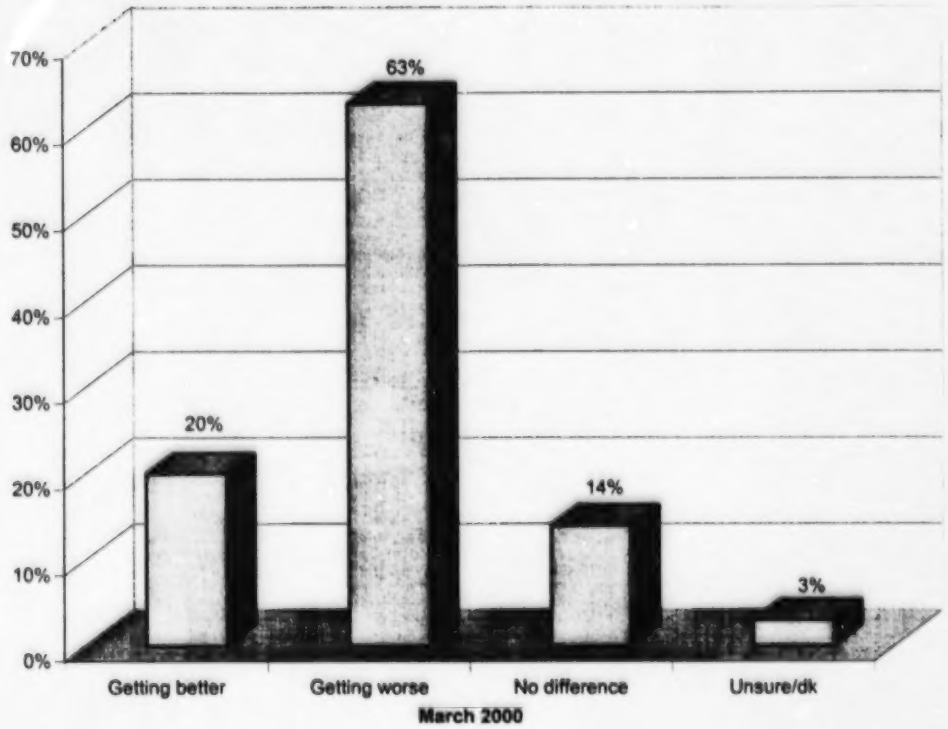
Question 4c. The government has launched a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography, and money laundering committed by organized groups like motorcycle gangs. The task force brings together the RCMP, city police forces, and a special prosecution team.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (92%) approve of the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography and money laundering by organized groups.

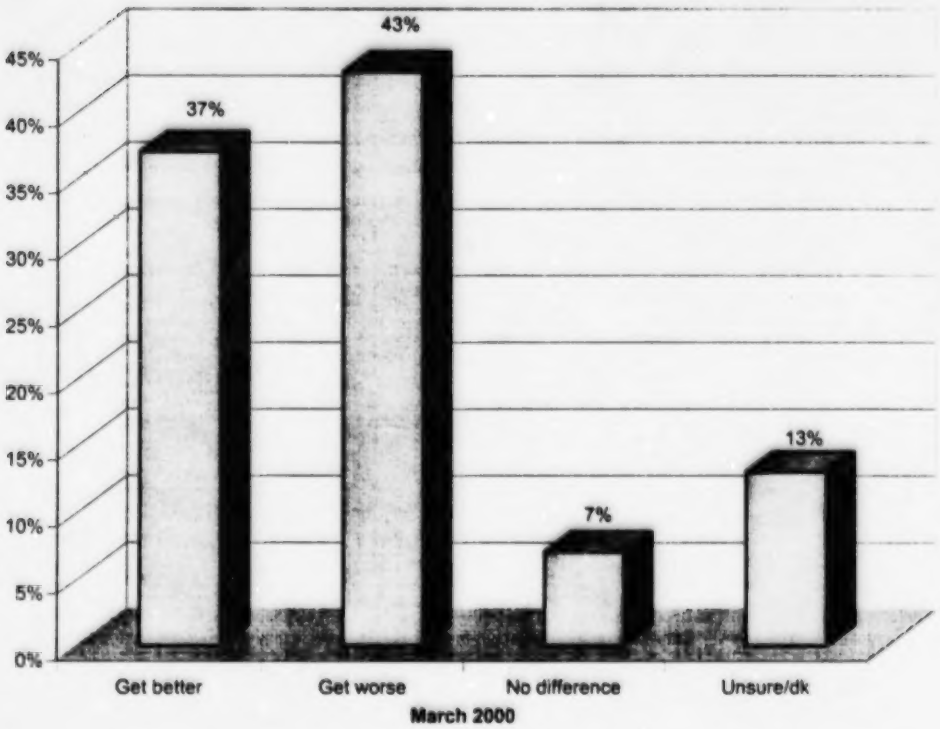
3.0 ECONOMY

Question 5. How do you feel about the Saskatchewan economy right now? In general do you feel things are getting better or getting worse?



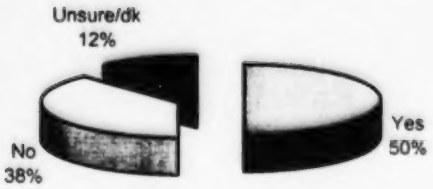
- The majority (63%) of residents currently feel the economy is getting worse. Approximately one fifth (20%) of Saskatchewan residents think the provincial economy is getting better.

Question 6. How do you feel the provincial economy will do over the next 10 years? Do you think it will get better or get worse?



- More than one third (37%) of residents think the provincial economy will get better over the next 10 years.

Question 7. Do you personally feel you will be better off 5 years from now?



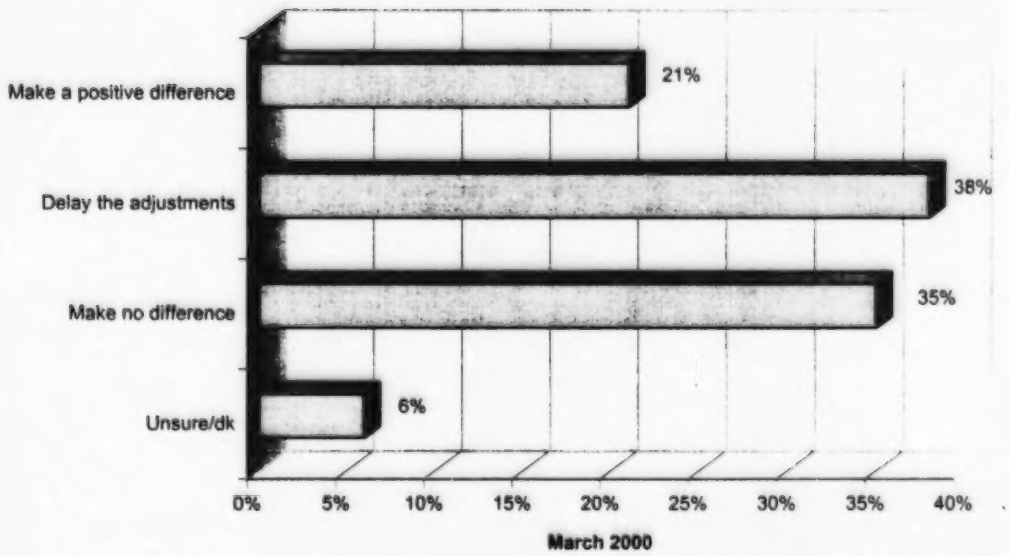
- One half of Saskatchewan residents (50%) think they will be better off 5 years from now.

4.0 AGRICULTURE

The province recently participated in a program to enhance support to Saskatchewan farmers to help them deal with the current farm crisis. The provincial government committed $120 million; the federal government committed $180 million, for a total of $300 million in additional income support for Saskatchewan farmers.

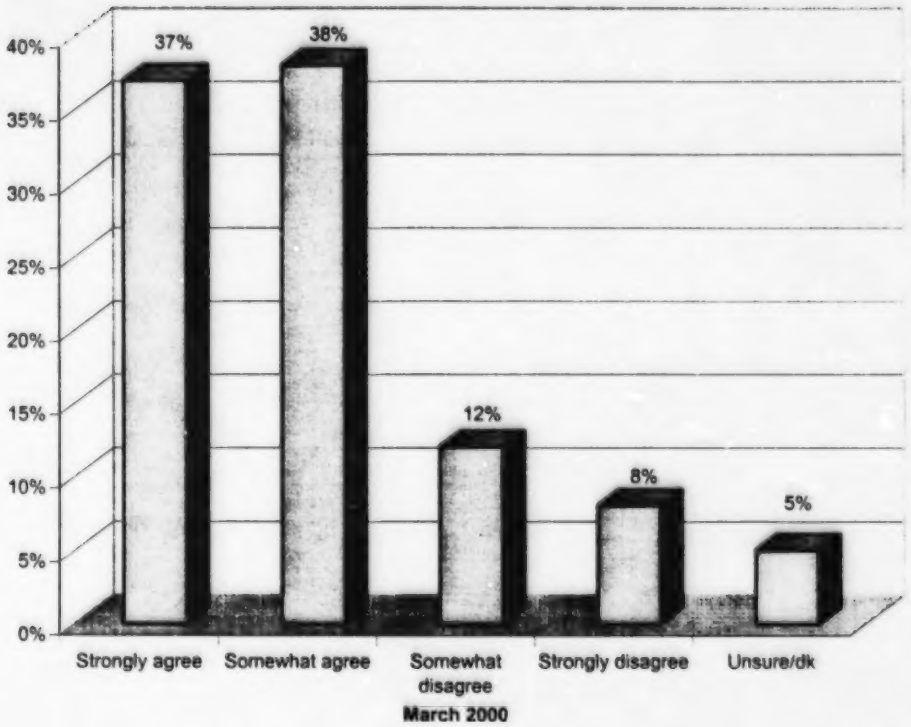
Question 8. Do you think that the recent announcement of additional federal and provincial support to Saskatchewan farmers will...

a) make a positive difference to the overall well-being of Saskatchewan farmers,
b) delay the adjustments that farmers will ultimately have to make, thereby creating more problems, or
c) make no difference to the overall well-being of farmers.



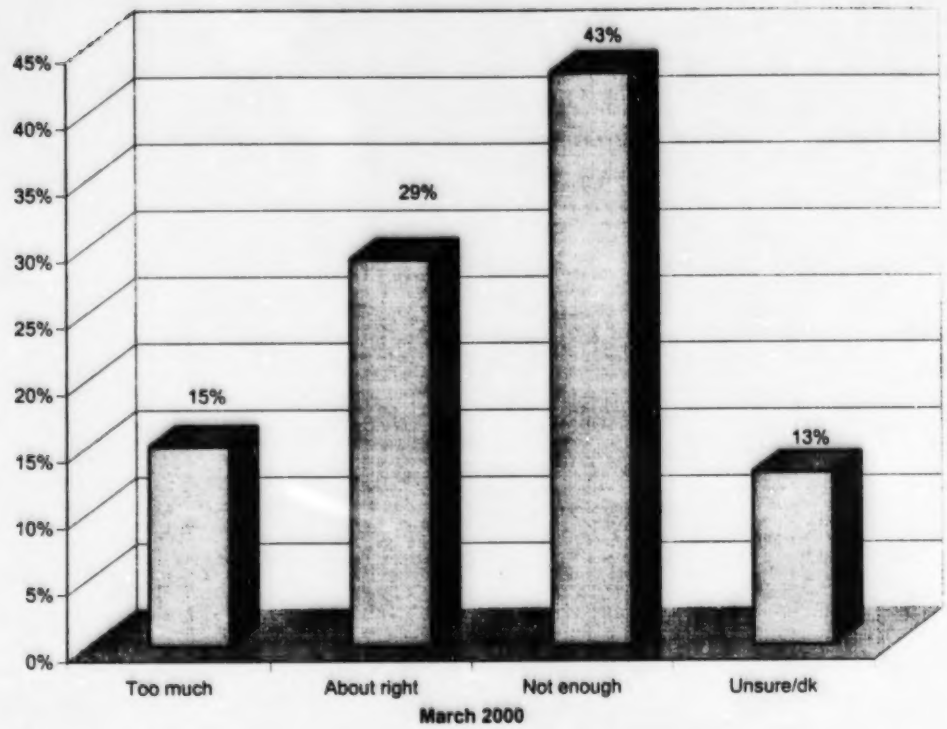
- More than one third (38%) of residents think the additional federal-provincial support to Saskatchewan farmers will delay the adjustments they will ultimately have to make, thereby creating more problems. Approximatley 35% think it will make no difference and 21% think the additional support will make a positive difference to the overall well-being of Saskatchewan farmers.

Question 9. Do you agree with the province's decision to participate financially in the recent federal-provincial announcement to assist farmers?



- Three quarters (75%) of Saskatchewan residents agree with the province's decision to participate financially in the recent federal-provincial announcement to assist farmers.

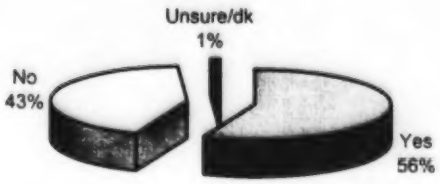
Question 10. Do you think the province's additional $120 million commitment is...



- More than one quarter (29%) of residents think the province's additional $120 million commitment is about right, 15% think it is too much and 43% think it is not enough.

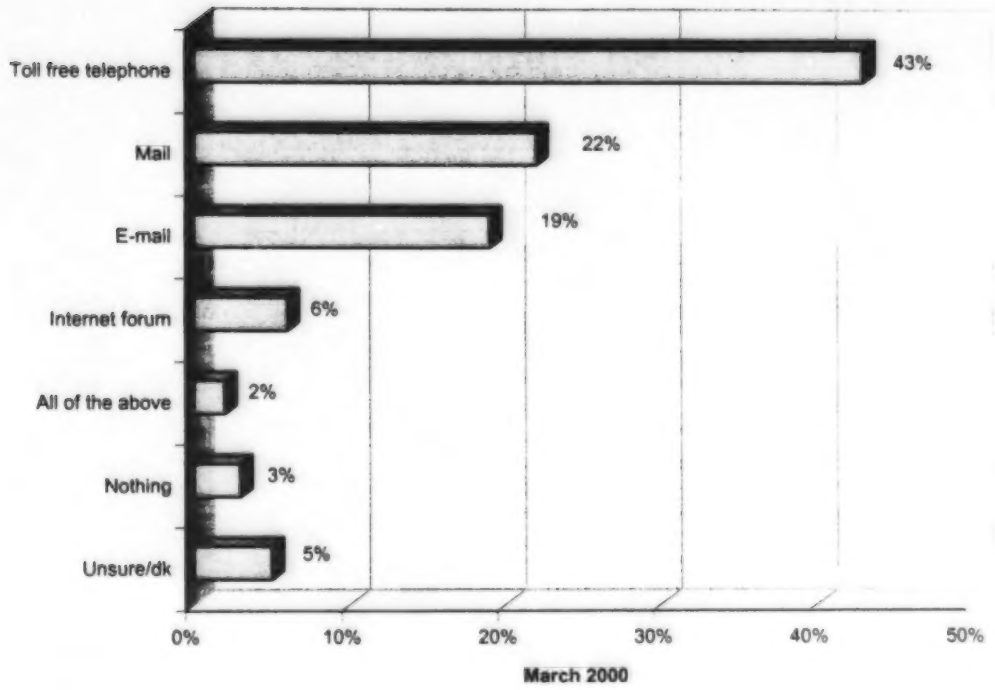
5.0 UTILITY RATE REVIEW PANEL

Question 11. Are you aware that an independent panel has been established to look into rate increase requests from utilities?



- The majority (56%) of Saskatchewan residents are aware that an independent panel has been established to look into rate increase requests from utilities.

Question 13. Other than a public meeting, if you wished to provide comments to the panel, what method would you prefer?

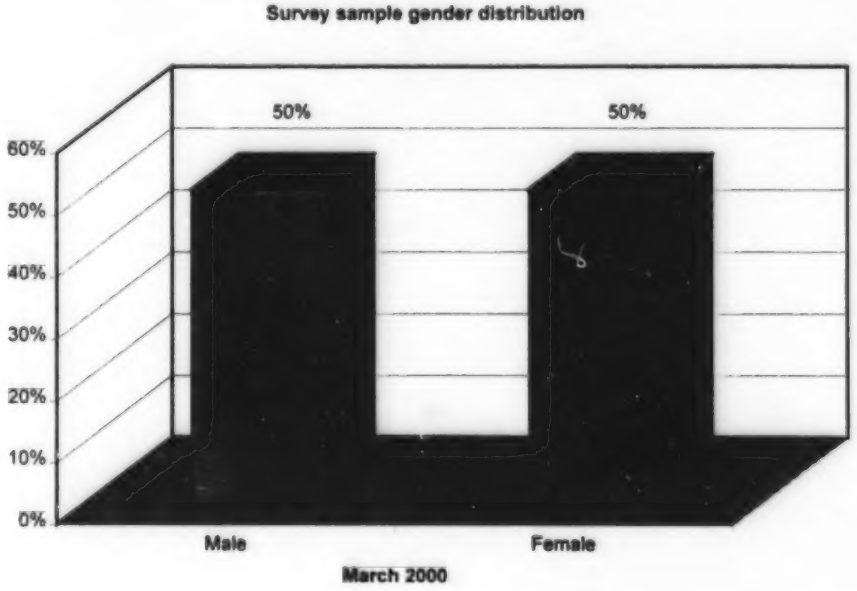


- Just under one half (43%) of those Saskatchewan residents who are aware of the independent panel suggest that, if they wished to provide comments to the panel, ways they could do so outside of attending a meeting would include through a toll free telephone number (24% of all respondents). Approximately 22% (or 12% of all respondents) would provide comments through the mail and 19% (or 10% of all respondents) would provide comments via e-mail.

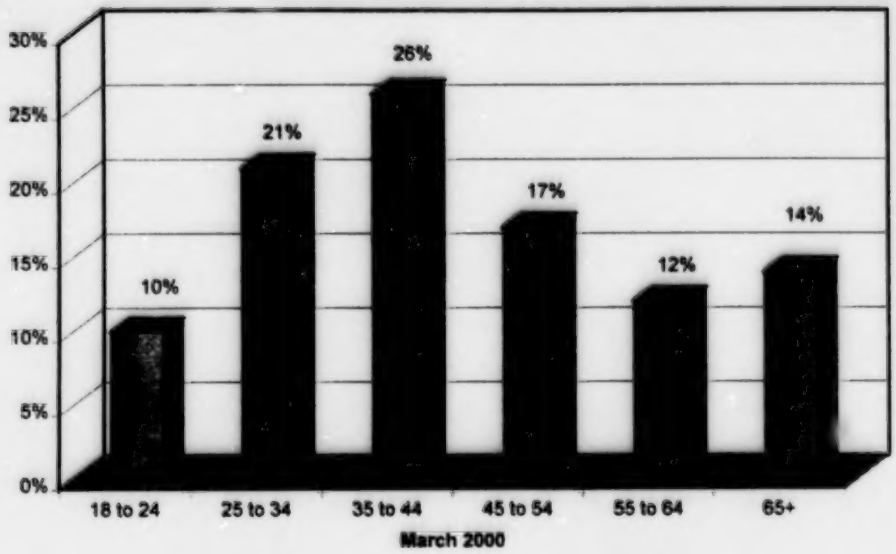
APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The omnibus public opinion sample frame is constructed to facilitate proportionate representation of various demographic characteristics evident within the province of Saskatchewan. This ensures that opinions of all the various types of residents in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report. The demographic distributions from the survey sample generally parallel the province's actual population distributions, as measured by Statistics Canada census data.

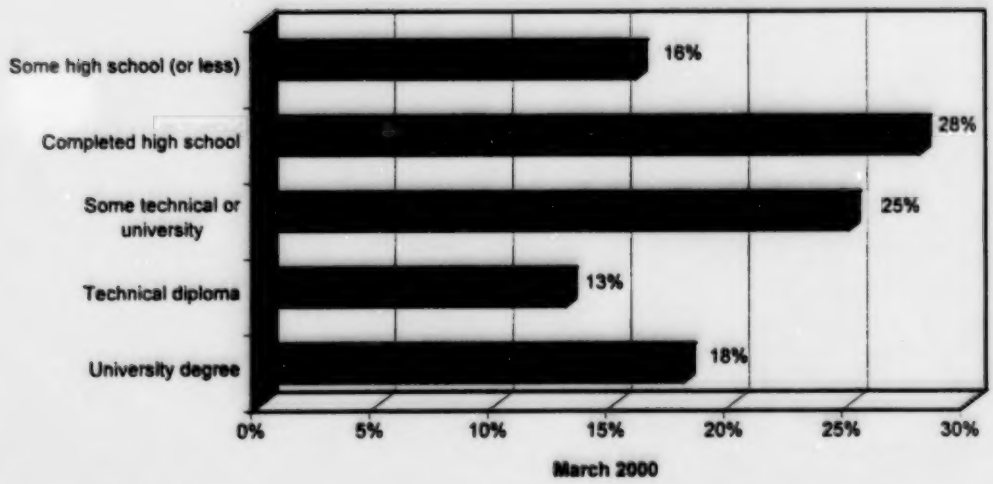
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.



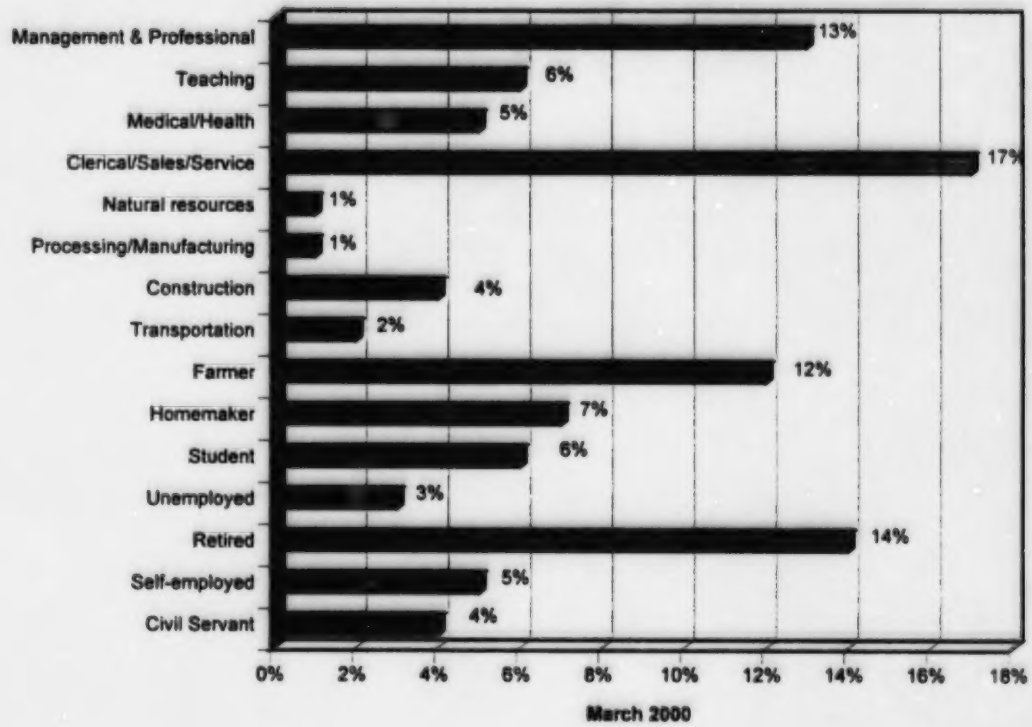
Survey sample age distribution



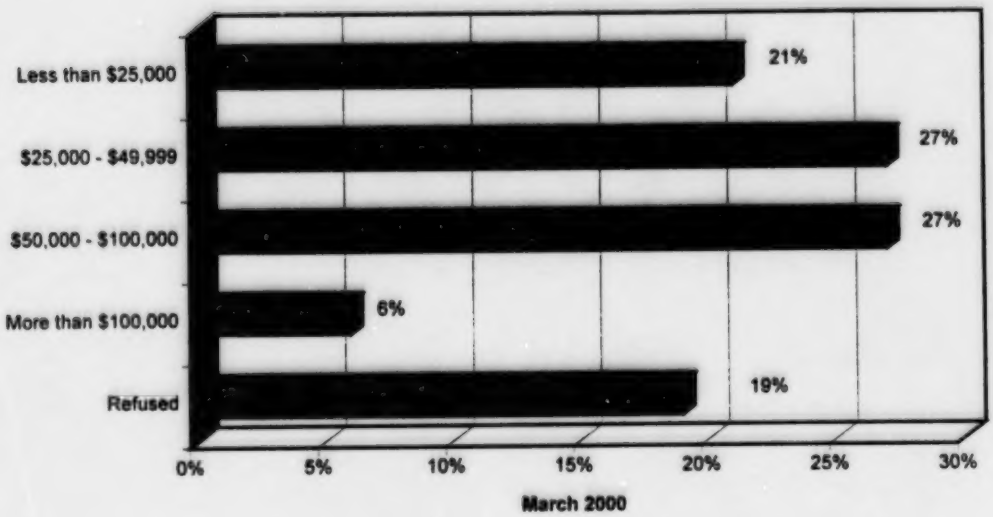
Survey sample education distribution



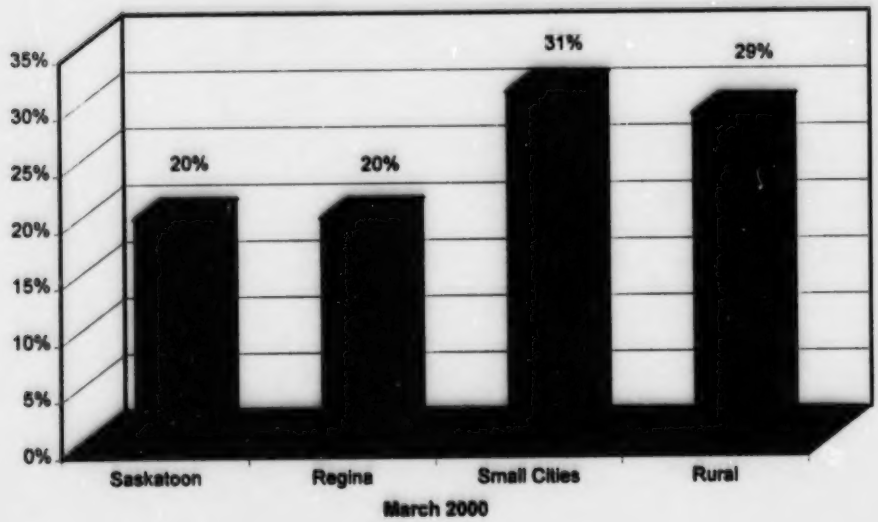
Survey sample occupation distribution



Survey sample income distribution



Survey sample regional distribution



Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Finance

Date:	**March, 2000**
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Saskatchewan Finance
Provincial Opinion Survey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with at the beginning of March 2000 are health care, agriculture and tax reductions.

- More than three quarters think it is very important for the provincial budget to focus on increased spending in health care.

- Approximately one half of Saskatchewan residents are aware that the Personal Income Tax Review Committee has submitted a proposal recommending a major re-design of the provincial income tax system.

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents are not prepared to pay provincial sales tax on more goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced.

- The primary concern that residents have regarding income tax reductions are with the provinces' ability to cut taxes while maintaining spending in priority areas like health care, and balancing the budget.

- Although the large majority of Saskatchewan residents think it is important that the upcoming provincial budget focus on investment in development areas like education and skills training, agriculture and rural development, research and development, transportation, Aboriginal participation in the economy and forestry and northern development, they also believe it is very important for the government to focus on tax reductions in the provincial budget.

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents would prefer the upcoming provincial budget to focus on social priorities like health care and education over focussing on creating economic growth.

- The majority of residents agree there is real opportunity for new levels of prosperity and growth if the provincial government reduces income tax while making the provincial tax system simple, fair and competitive as part of a larger economic plan.

- Three quarters of Saskatchewan residents agree a reduction of up to $1,000 a year in the provincial income taxes they pay would be significant for them and their family and would help keep young people and families in Saskatchewan.

- The majority of residents agree Saskatchewan needs a tax system competitive with other provinces.

- More than three quarters of Saskatchewan residents agree that unless something is done to reduce the level of provincial income tax in Saskatchewan, soon the province won't have enough taxpayers to support the services they and their family need.

- Saskatchewan residents are divided in terms of what they think negatively affects the provincial economy more - provincial sales tax or provincial income tax.

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents think it is very important for Saskatchewan's income tax system to be changed in the upcoming provincial budget.

METHODOLOGY

Anderson/Fast & Associates was retained by the Department of Finance to conduct public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The Department of Finance Provincial Opinion Survey contains questions designed to gain insight into the opinion of Saskatchewan residents regarding the provincial economy and the provincial income tax system.

The questions for the survey were provided by the Department of Finance. Anderson/Fast reviewed the questions offered recommendations and assembled the survey into an interview format by. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 1,000 households throughout Saskatchewan. To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

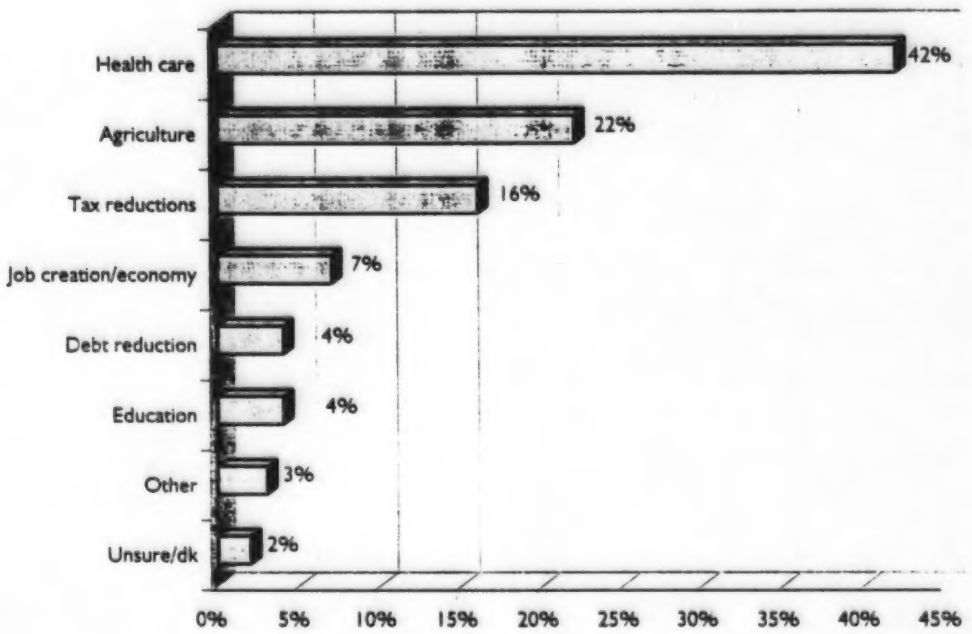
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed over a seven day period between Thursday, March 2 and Wednesday, March 8, 2000. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Anderson/Fast's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

The Department of Finance survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points: reliable results with low variability. Frequency charts for all public opinion issues are illustrated in this report.

Anderson/Fast designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. We also conducted statistical tests on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

1.0 GENERAL ISSUES

Question 1. What do you think is the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today?



- The most important issue facing the province today, according to 42% of Saskatchewan residents, is health care*. Approximately 22% of residents are concerned with agriculture, 16% are concerned with taxes, 7% are concerned about jobs creation and the economy, 4% of respondents are primarily concerned with the accumulated provincial debt, and another 4% mention education.

- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 3% of respondents are rising fuel prices and social programs and welfare.

* It is important to note that this survey was conducted on the heels of the Federal budget which received widespread criticism for its lack of increased spending in health care. It also followed the federal/provincial announcement of a farm-aid package for Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Previous to this, agriculture had been the most important issue of concern for Saskatchewan residents.

Females (49%) are more likely than males (36%) to say health care is the most important issue facing the province today.

Respondents with grade 12 or less (54%) education are more likely than those with more education to say health care is the most important issue facing the province today.

Respondents not currently in the work force (55%) are more likely than those in the work force to say health care is the most important issue facing the province today.

Respondents with income greater than $50,000 (35%) are less likely than those with less income to think health care is the most important issue facing Saskatchewan today.

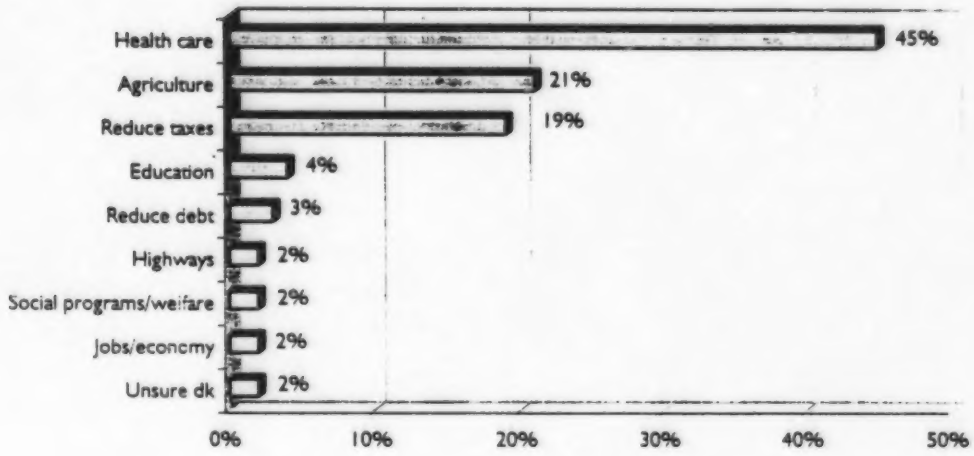
Rural residents (31%) are more likely than urban residents (19%) to think agriculture is the most important issue facing the province.

Males (31%) are more likely than females (9%) to think tax reductions are the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today.

Respondents with grade 12 or less education (8%) are less likely than those with more education to think tax reductions are the most important issue in the province.

2.0 BUDGET ISSUES

Question 2. The Government of Saskatchewan is introducing the provincial budget later this month. Thinking of all the issues currently facing Saskatchewan, which one do you feel should receive the greatest attention in the upcoming provincial budget?



- Almost one half (45%) of Saskatchewan residents think health care should receive the greatest attention in the upcoming provincial budget. Approximately 21% think agriculture should receive the greatest attention and 19% say tax reductions.

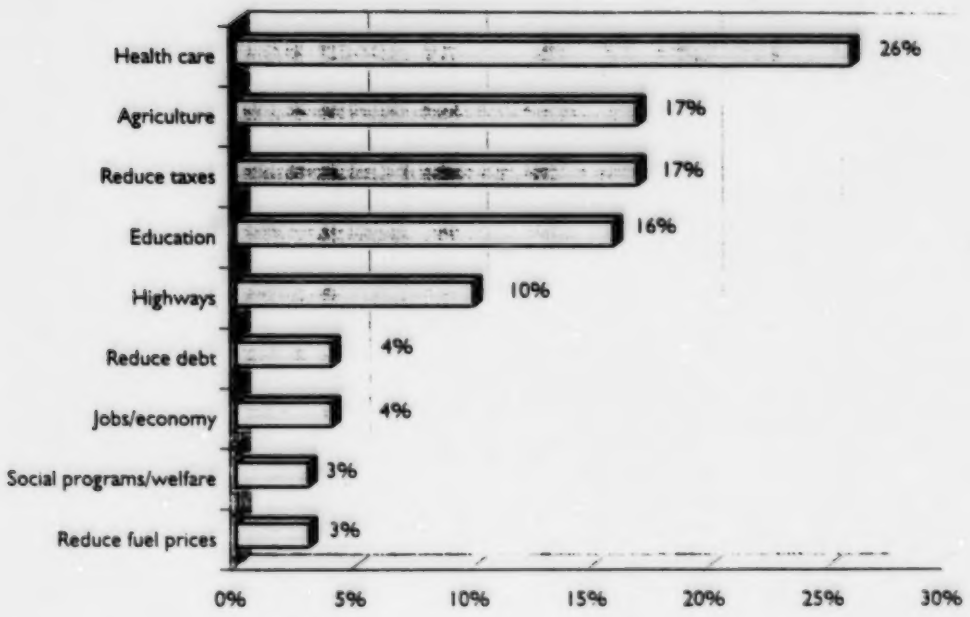
Females (52%) are more likely than males (39%) to think health care should receive the most attention in the upcoming provincial budget.

Rural residents (28%) are more likely than urban residents (18%) to think agriculture should receive the most attention.

Males (25%) are more likely than females (12%) to think reducing taxes should receive the greatest attention in the upcoming provincial budget.

As income increases respondents are more likely to think reducing taxes should receive the most attention in the upcoming budget (<$25,000 – 13%, $25,000-$50,000 – 18%, >$50,000 – 25%).

Question 3. Any there any other issues you think the provincial budget should focus on?



- More than one quarter (26%) of Saskatchewan residents mention health care as the second most important issue the provincial budget should focus on, 17% mention agriculture, another 17% say tax reductions, 16% say education and 10% think highways is the second most important issue the provincial budget should focus on.

3.0 VICQ RECOMMENDATIONS

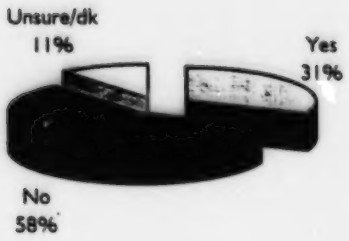
Question 4. Are you aware that the Personal Income Tax Review Committee - sometimes called the Vicq recommendations - has submitted a report to the Minister of Finance recommending a major re-design of Saskatchewan's personal tax system?

- The majority (51%) of residents are aware that the Personal Income Tax Review Committee has submitted a proposal recommending a major re-design of the provincial tax system.

Respondents with post secondary education (54%) are more likely than those with less education to be aware of the Committee's recommendations.

Respondents earning less than $25,000 a year (34%) are less likely than those with higher incomes to be aware of the Committee's recommendations.

Question 5. The Committee recommends lowering provincial income tax over four years and applying the provincial sales tax to more goods and services. Generally speaking, are you prepared to pay provincial sales tax on more goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced?



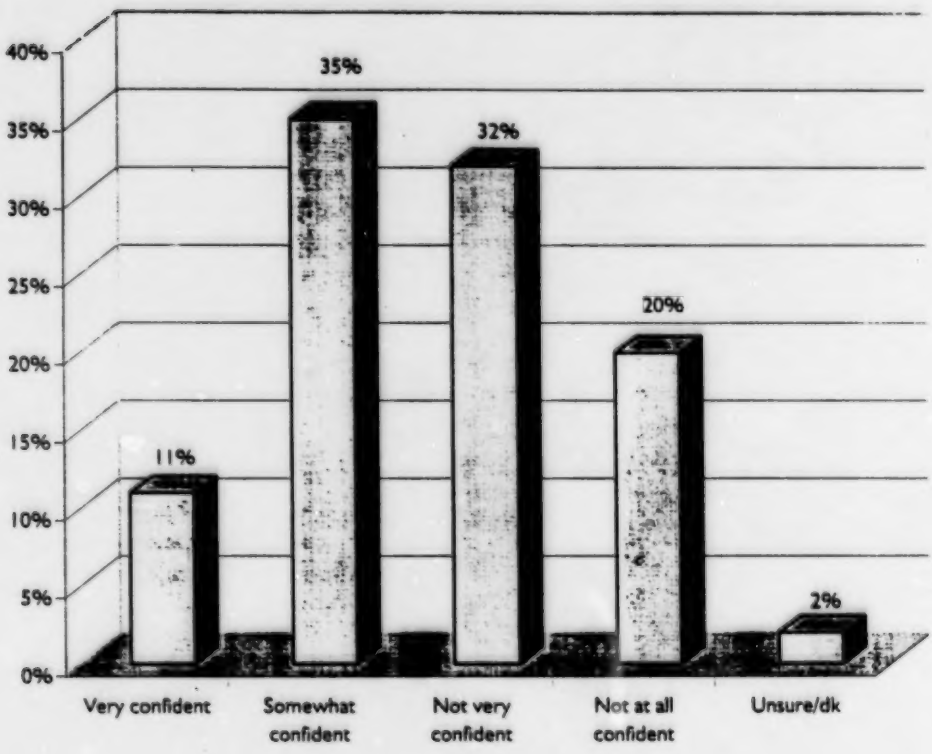
- The majority (58%) of Saskatchewan residents are not prepared to pay provincial sales tax on more goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced. Approximately 31% are prepared to pay more.

Respondents earning more than $50,000 a year (38%) are more likely than those earning less to support expanding the provincial sales tax to more goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced.

Rural residents (65%) are less likely than urban residents (55%) to support paying provincial sales tax on more goods and services.

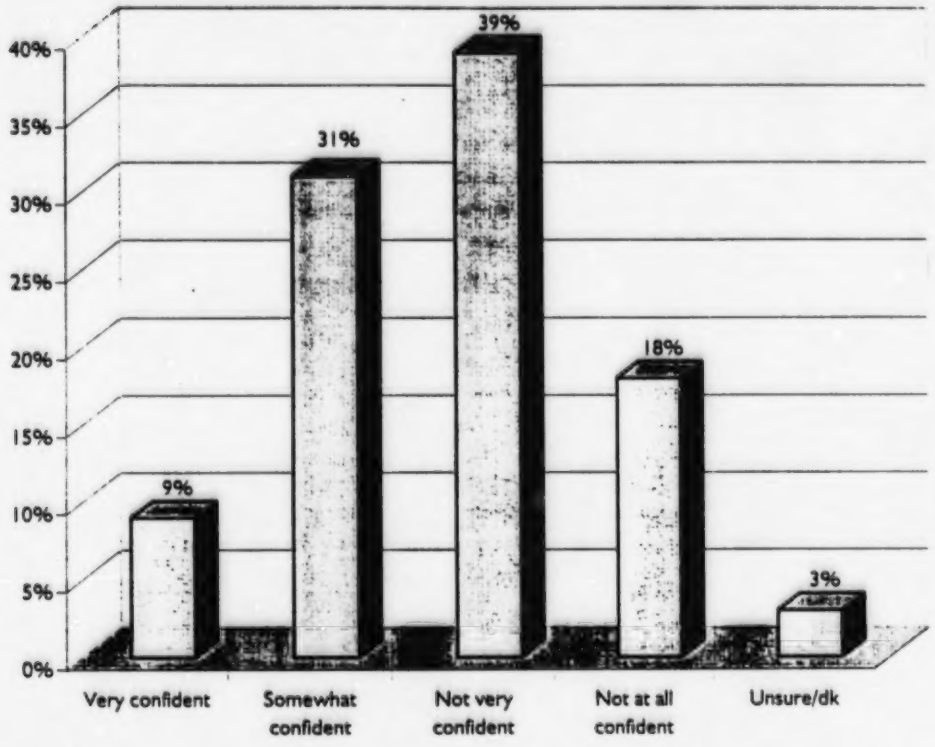
Single parents (68%) are less likely than married couples with children and those without children to support paying provincial sales tax on more goods and services.

Question 6. How confident are you that the provincial government can table a budget that reduces the overall tax burden on residents and keep the budget balanced? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident or not confident at all?



- Slightly less than one half (46%) of Saskatchewan residents are confident the government can table a budget that reduces the overall tax burden on residents and keep the budget balanced; the majority (52%) are not confident. Only about one fifth of residents, however, are not at all confident.

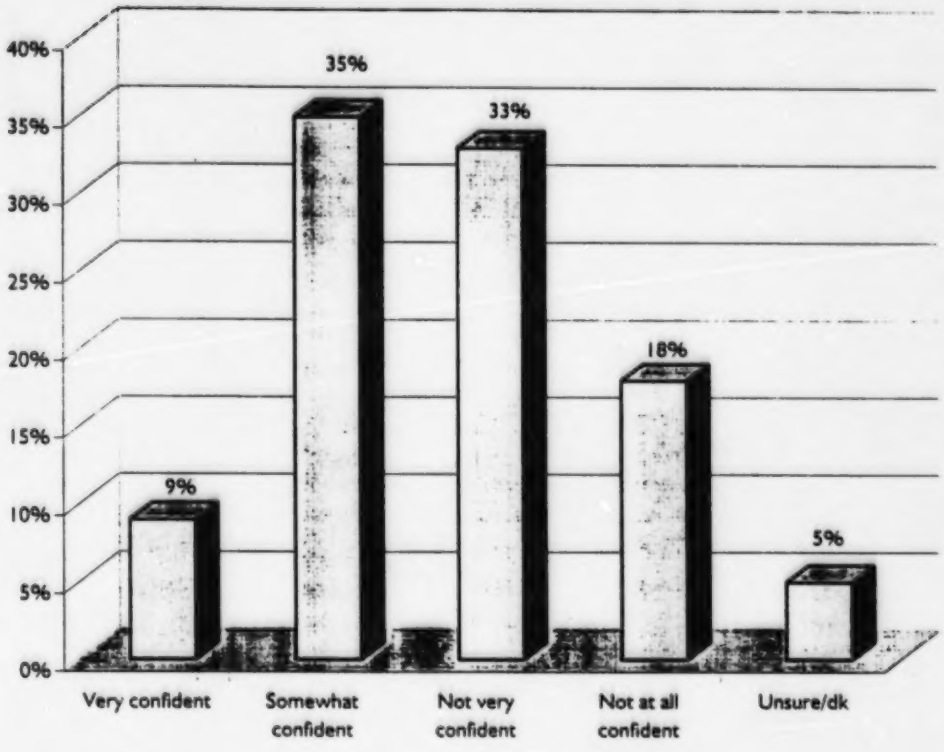
Question 7. How confident are you that the provincial government can reduce the overall tax burden on residents and maintain existing levels of spending in priority areas like health care, education and highways?



The primary concern that people have regarding income tax reductions are with the provinces' ability to cut taxes while maintaining spending in priority areas like health care, and balancing the budget.

- Approximately 40% of Saskatchewan residents are confident the government can reduce the overall tax burden on residents and maintain existing levels of spending in priority areas like health, education and highways, less than one fifth of residents are not at all confident.

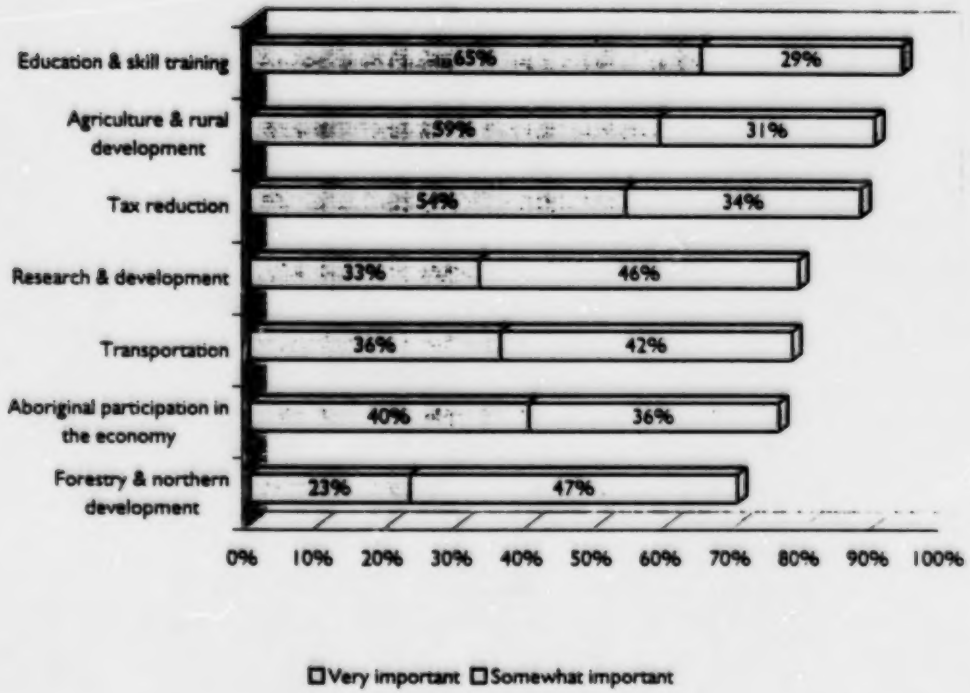
Question 8. How confident are you that the provincial government can reduce the overall tax burden on residents and maintain existing levels of spending in areas like health care and highways and balance the budget as the result of increased economic growth?



- Slightly less than one half (44%) of residents are confident the government can reduce the overall tax burden on residents and maintain existing levels of spending in areas like health and education and balance the budget as the result of increased economic growth.

4.0 BUDGET PRIORITIES

Question 9. The provincial budget can spend taxpayers' money in different areas in an effort to create economic growth and opportunities in Saskatchewan. In the upcoming provincial budget, how important do you think it is for the government to focus on . . .



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents think it is important in the upcoming provincial budget for the government to focus on investment in development areas such as education and skill training (94%), agriculture and rural development (90%), research and development (79%), transportation (78%), Aboriginal participation in the economy (76%) and forestry and northern development (70%).

- The majority of residents also believe it is very important for the government to focus on tax reductions in the provincial budget.

Females (70%) are more likely than males (60%) to think education and skills training is very important for the government to focus on.

Urban residents (68%) are more likely than rural residents (58%) to think education and skills training is very important.

Rural residents (69%) are more likely than urban residents (55%) to think agriculture and rural development is very important.

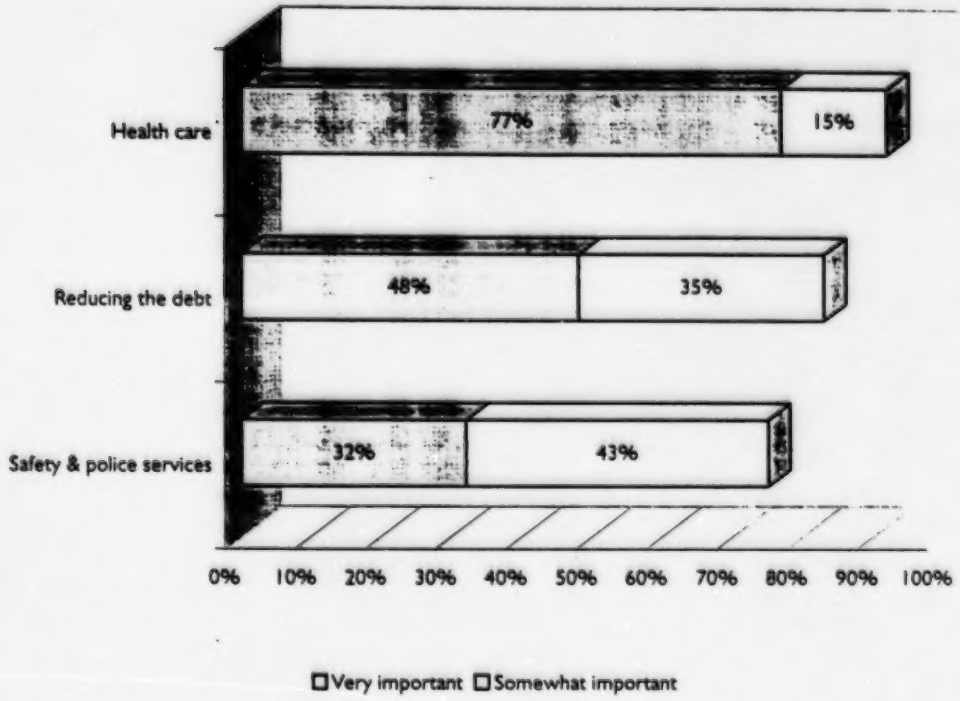
Males (59%) are more likely than females (50%) to think tax reductions are very important for the government to focus on.

Saskatoon residents (45%) are more likely than those living in other areas to think research and development is very important for the government to focus on.

Rural residents (43%) are more likely than urban residents (33%) to think transportation is very important.

Urban residents (43%) are more likely than rural residents (32%) to think Aboriginal participation in the economy is very important for the government to focus on.

Question 10. How important do you think it is for the provincial budget to focus on increased spending in . . .



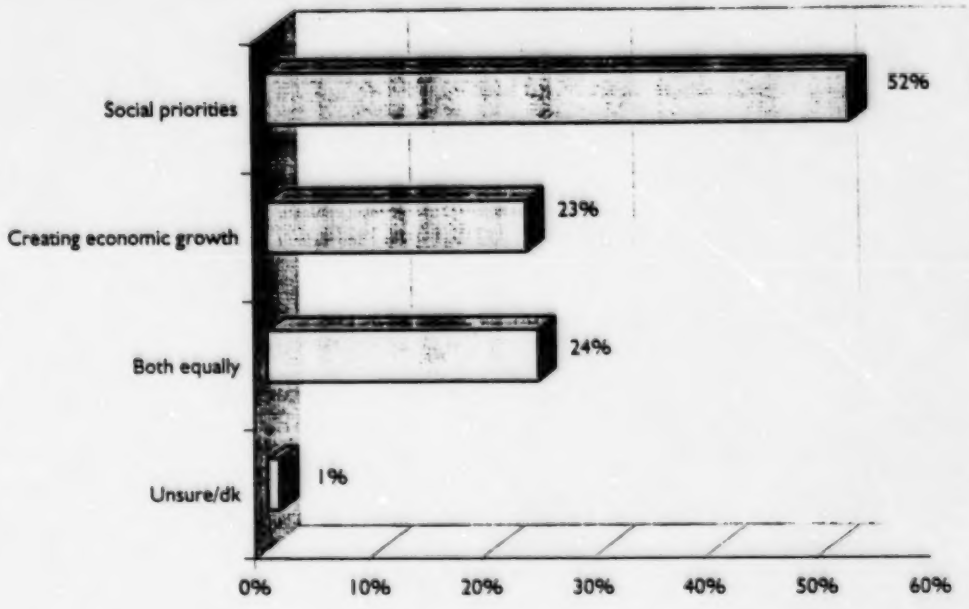
- More than three quarters of residents think it is very important for the provincial budget to focus on increased spending in health care (92% important), reducing the debt (83% important) and safety and police services (75% important).

Females (83%) are more likely than males (71%) to think it is very important for the provincial budget to focus on increased spending in health care.

Females (38%) are more likely than males (26%) to think it is very important for the provincial budget to focus on safety and police services.

Single parents (43%) are more likely than married couples with children and those without children to think it is very important for the provincial budget to focus on safety and police services.

Question 11. Generally speaking what would you prefer the upcoming provincial budget focus on - creating future economic growth and opportunities, or on social priorities like health care and education?

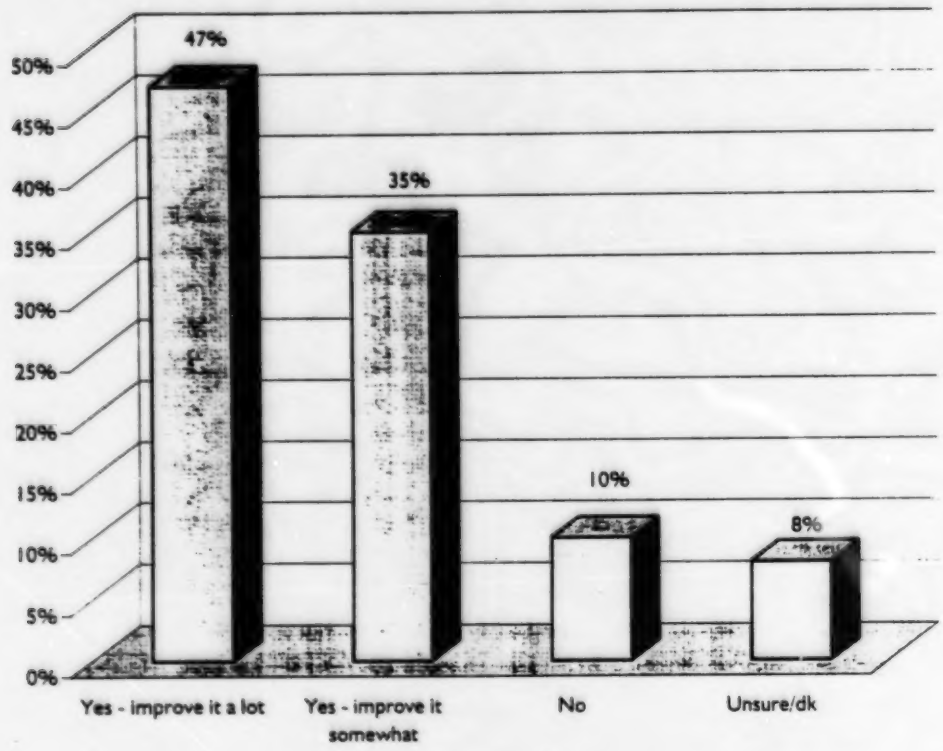


- The majority (52%) of residents would prefer the upcoming provincial budget to focus on social priorities like health care and education, 23% would prefer the budget to focus on creating economic growth and 24% would prefer the provincial budget to focus on both of these equally.

As education levels increase respondents are more likely to think the upcoming provincial budget should focus on creating economic growth and opportunities (grade 12 or less – 10%, high school graduate – 21%, post secondary education – 29%).

Males (30%) are more likely than females (16%) to think the upcoming budget should focus on economic growth and opportunities, while females (59%) are more likely than males (45%) to think the upcoming budget should focus on social priorities like health care and education.

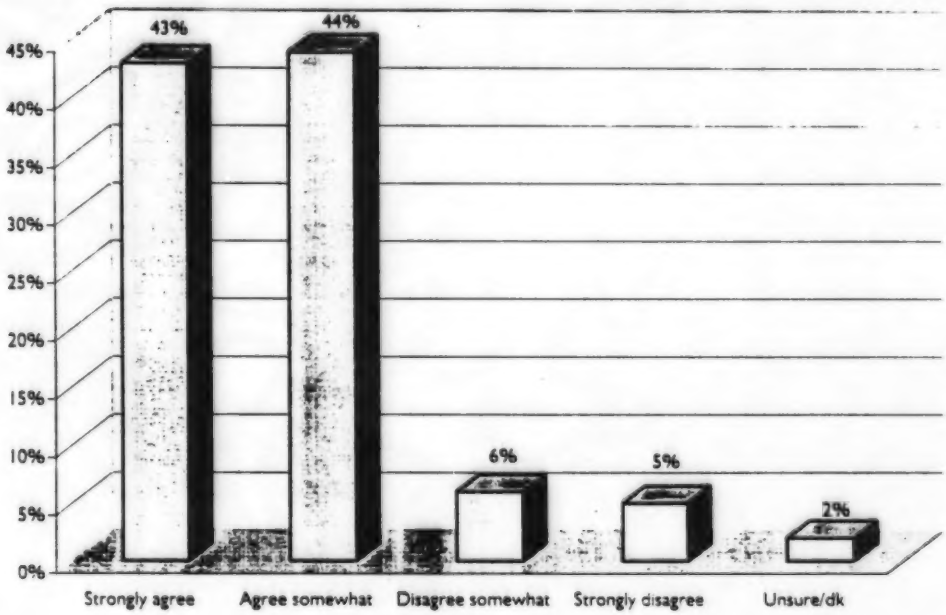
Question 12. Do you believe that if the provincial government had a plan that included a tax reduction strategy and a new economic development strategy as part of a new approach to creating more economic opportunities, that such a plan would improve Saskatchewan's economic prospects?



- The majority (82%) of residents think that a plan that included a tax reduction strategy and a new economic development strategy as part of a new approach to creating more economic opportunities would improve Saskatchewan's economic prospects.

In order to get a better sense of how people feel about some budget issues I'm going to read some statements and after each one I'd like you to tell me if you agree or disagree with the statement.

Question 13. The economy in Saskatchewan is changing and there is real opportunity for new levels of prosperity and growth if the provincial government reduces income tax while making the provincial tax system simple, fair and competitive as part of a larger economic plan.

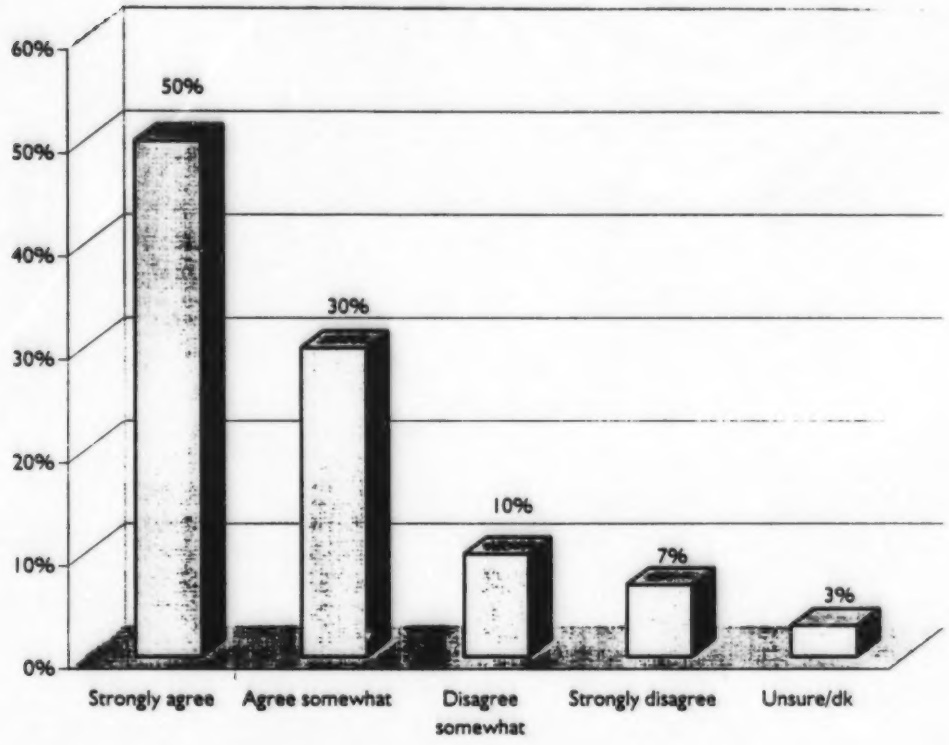


- The large majority (87%) of residents agree there is real opportunity for new levels of prosperity and growth if the provincial government reduces income tax while making the provincial tax system simple, fair and competitive as part of a larger economic plan.

Males (50%) are more likely than females (36%) to strongly agree there is real economic opportunity for new levels of prosperity and growth if the government reduces income tax while making the tax system simple, fair and competitive.

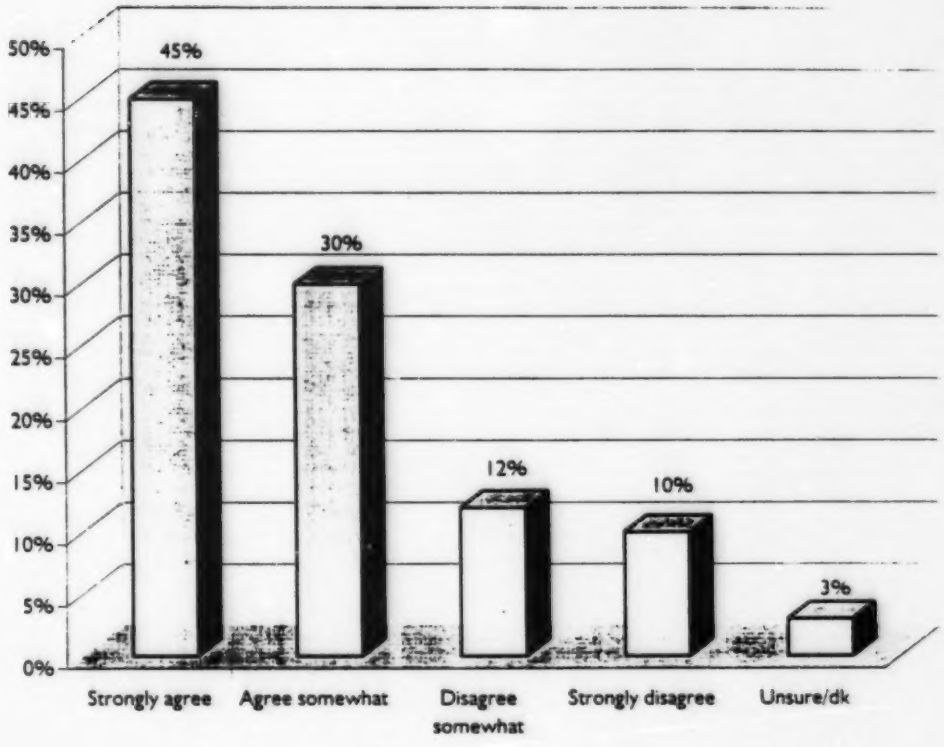
As income levels increase respondents are more likely to strongly agree with this plan (<$25,000 – 37%, $25,000-$50,000 – 42%, >$50,000 – 48%).

Question 14. The Government of Saskatchewan must lower taxes in the upcoming budget in order for the provincial economy to grow.



- More than three quarters (80%) agree the Government of Saskatchewan must lower taxes in the upcoming budget in order for the provincial economy to grow. One half (50%) *strongly* agree.

Question 15. A reduction of up to $1,000 a year in the provincial income taxes I pay would be significant for me and my family and would help keep young people and families in Saskatchewan.



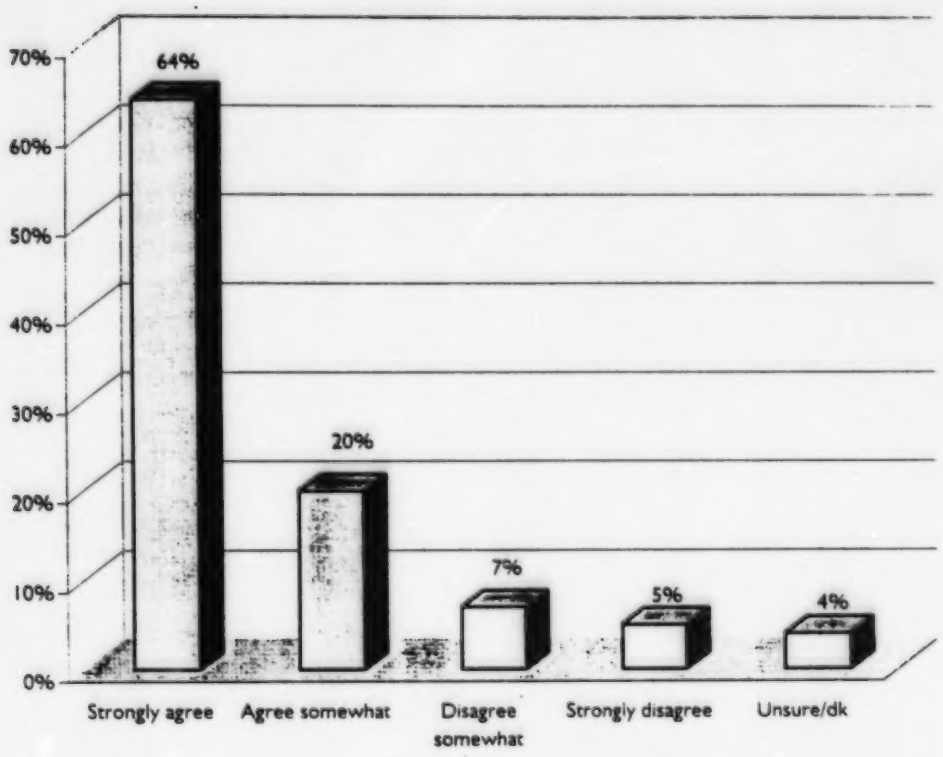
- Three quarters (75%) of Saskatchewan residents agree a reduction of up to $1,000 a year in the provincial income taxes they pay would be significant for them and their family and would help keep young people and families in Saskatchewan.

Males (49%) are more likely than females (40%) to strongly agree that a reduction of $1,000 a year in the provincial income taxes would be significant.

Urban residents (47%) are more likely than rural residents (39%) to strongly agree that a reduction of $1,000 a year in the provincial income taxes would be significant.

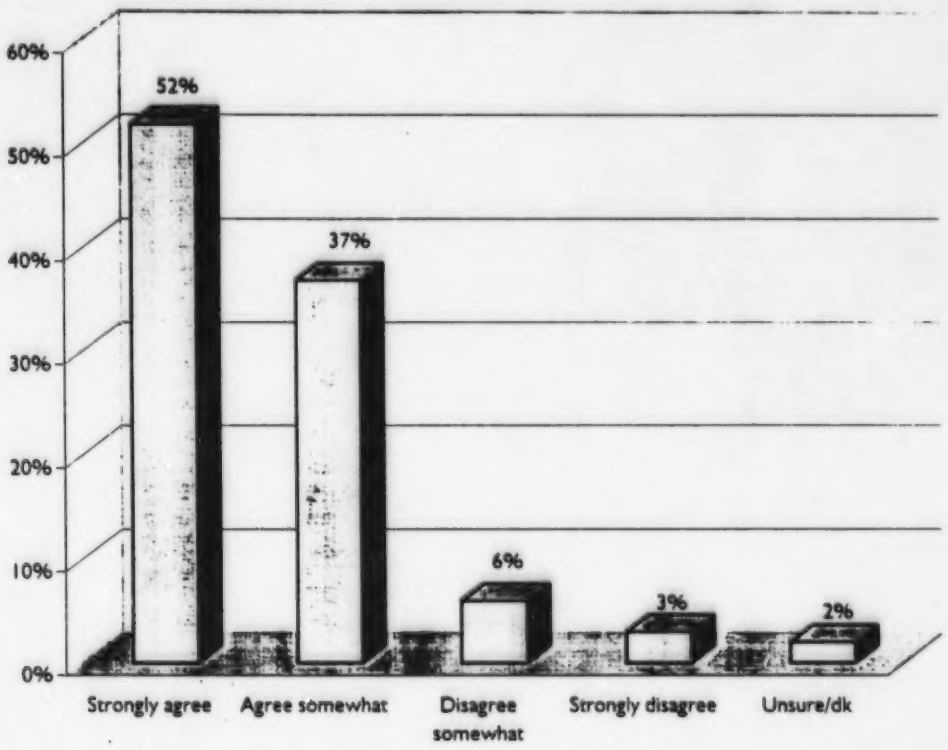
Married couples with children (51%) are more likely than single parents and those without children to strongly agree that a reduction of $1,000 a year in the provincial income taxes would be significant.

Question 16. High provincial income taxes are one of the main reasons Saskatchewan doesn't attract more business and investment. Saskatchewan needs a tax system more competitive with other provinces.



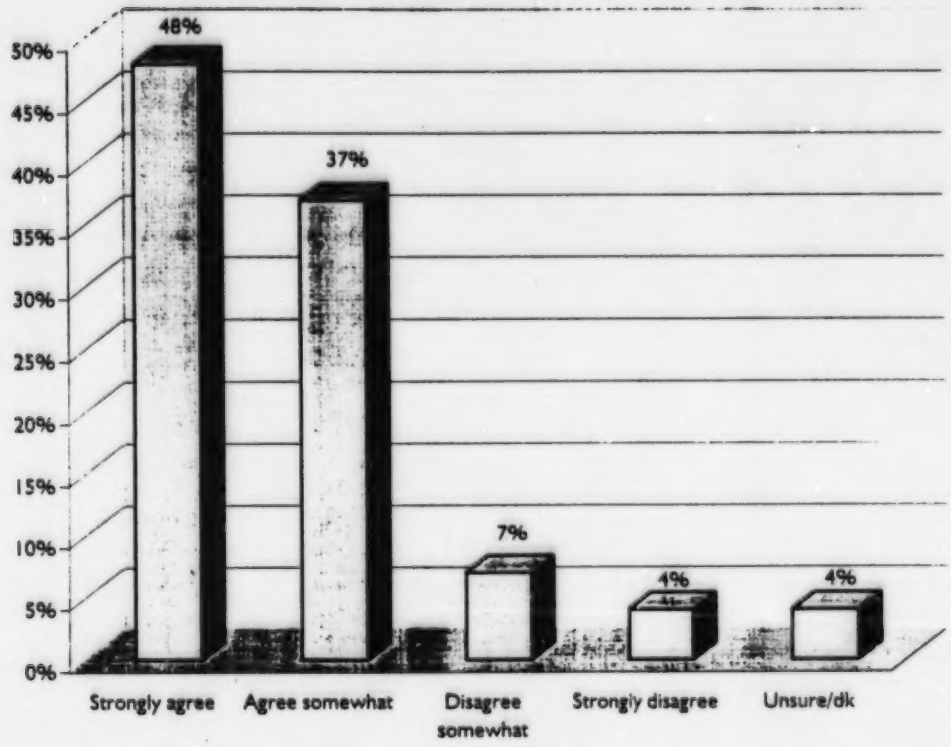
- The large majority (84%) of residents agree Saskatchewan needs a tax system competitive with other provinces (Alberta). The majority (64%) *strongly* agree.

Question 17. The provincial budget needs to focus attention on attracting and creating opportunities for new types of companies in agriculture, mining and forestry.



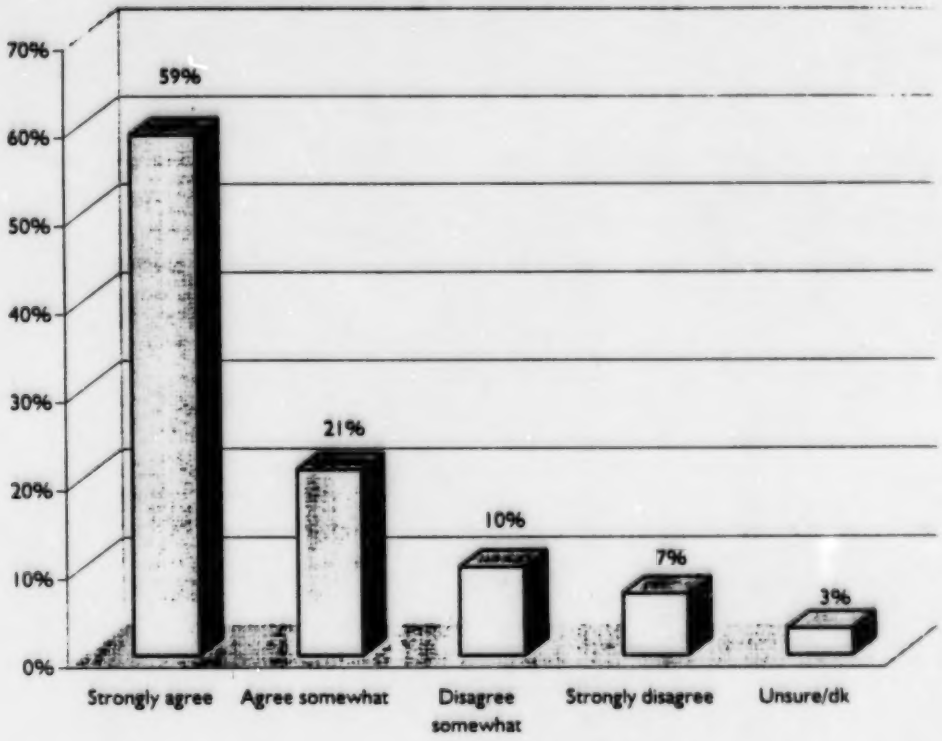
- The large majority (89%) of Saskatchewan residents agree the provincial budget needs to focus attention on attracting and creating opportunities for new types of companies in agriculture, mining and forestry. The majority (52%) *strongly* agree.

Question 18. The provincial budget should focus attention on attracting and creating opportunities for new types of companies in new industries other than agriculture, mining and forestry.



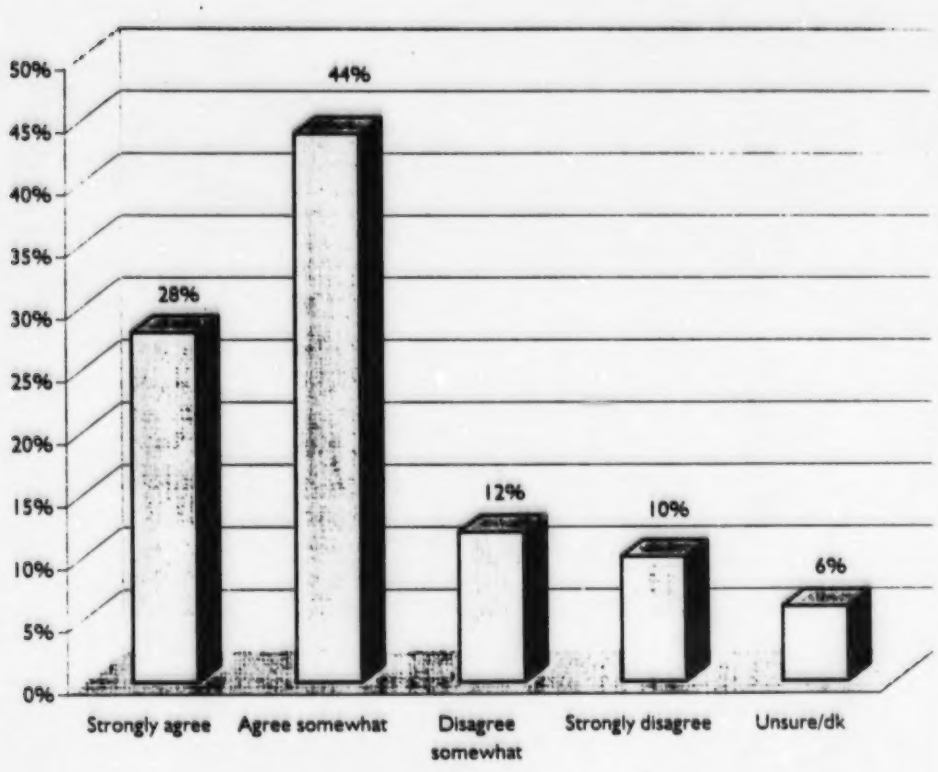
- The large majority (85%) of residents agree the provincial budget should focus attention on attracting and creating opportunities for new types of companies in new industries other than agriculture, mining and forestry.

Question 19. Unless something is done to reduce the level of provincial income tax in Saskatchewan, soon the province won't have enough taxpayers to support the services that my family and I need.



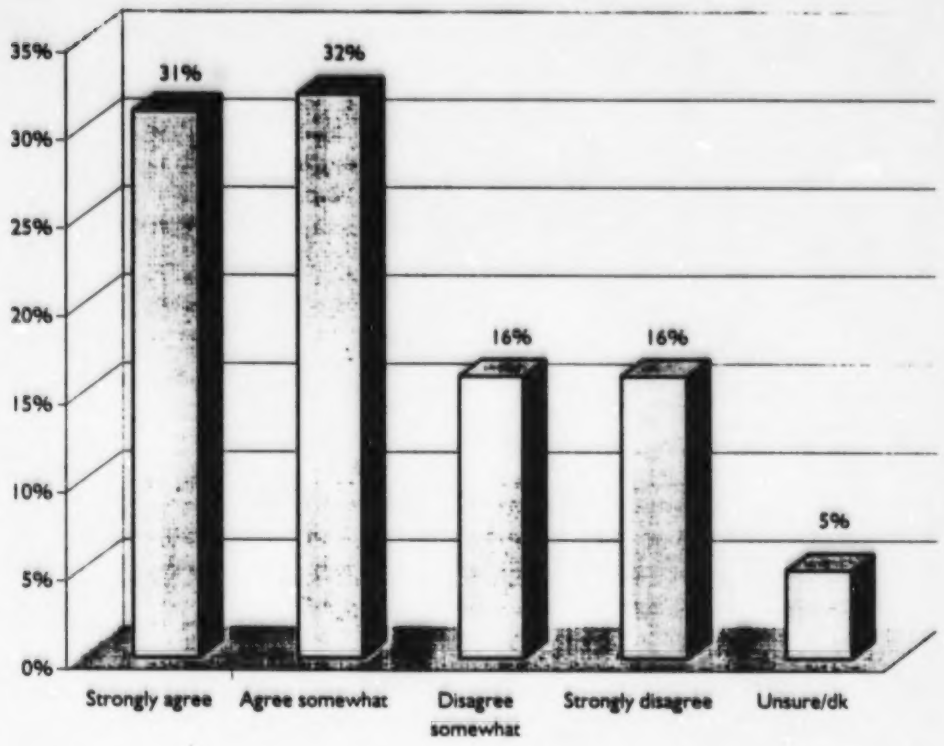
- More than three quarters (80%) of residents agree that unless something is done to reduce the level of provincial income tax in Saskatchewan, soon the province won't have enough taxpayers to support the services they and their family need. The majority (59%) *strongly* agree.

Question 20. One of the keys to Saskatchewan's future economic prosperity is the need for more research and development. The Saskatchewan Government must put more investment into research and development in order to improve our economic opportunities.



- The majority (72%) of residents agree the Saskatchewan Government must put more investment into research and development in order to improve our economic opportunities.

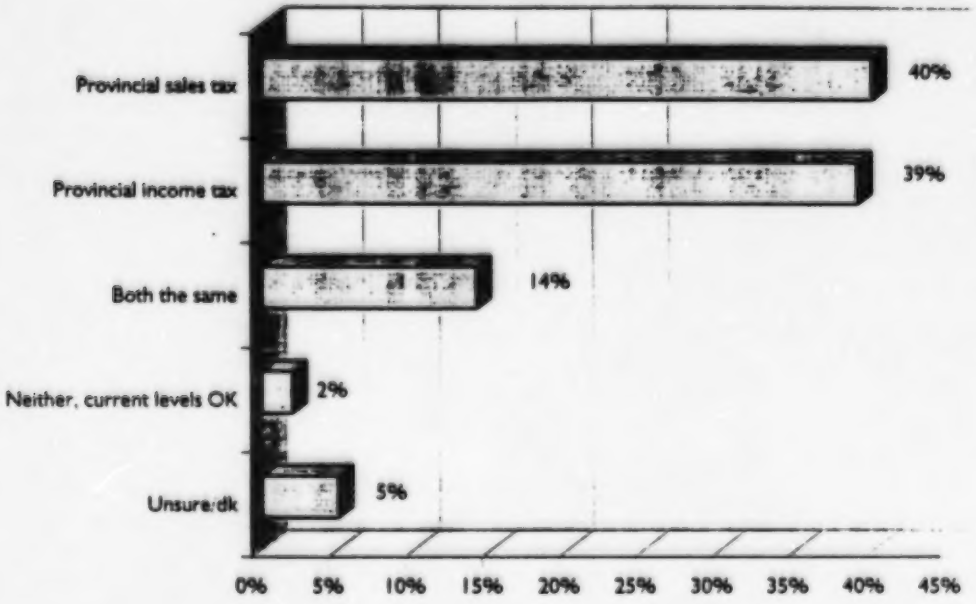
Question 21. The provincial government can't afford to maintain the entire provincial highways system. It would be better for the provincial government to focus its spending on highways which are likely to have the greatest economic benefit to the province.



- The majority (63%) of Saskatchewan residents agree it would be better for the provincial government to focus its spending on highways which are likely to have the greatest economic benefit to the province.

5.0 CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Question 22. In your opinion what negatively affects the provincial economy more: the sales tax or the provincial income tax?



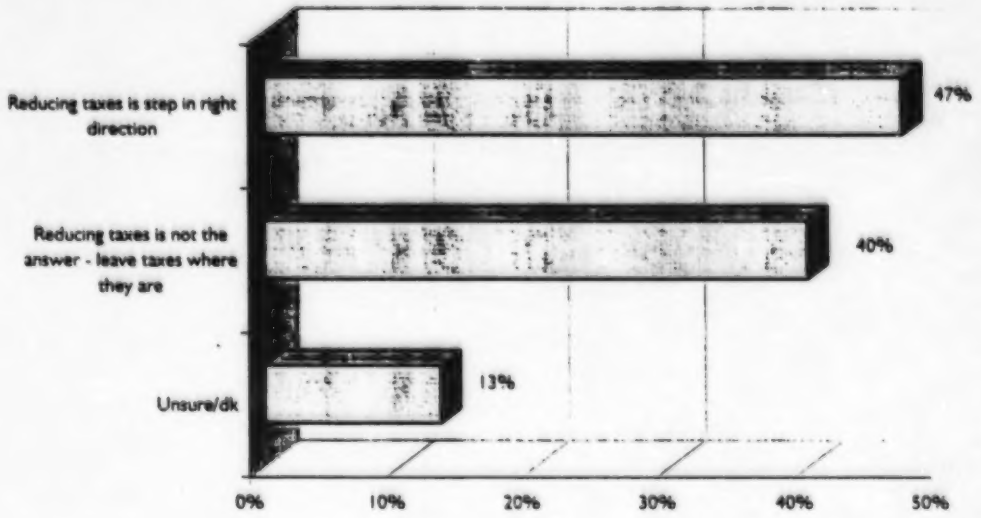
- Respondents are divided in terms of what they think negatively affects the provincial economy more: 40% think provincial sales tax while 39% think provincial income tax.

Single parents (55%) are more likely than married couples with children and those without children to think the provincial sales tax negatively affects the provincial economy more.

Married couples with children (46%) are more likely than single parents and those without children to think provincial income tax negatively affects the provincial economy more.

Respondents earning more than $50,000 a year (46%) are more likely than those earning less to think provincial income tax negatively affects the provincial economy more.

Question 23. Earlier we asked you what you thought the most important issue facing the province is today. Do you think that reducing provincial income taxes to make the province more competitive is a step towards solving problems like this, or do you think the provincial budget should leave taxes the way they are and spend more on social programs like health care and education?



- Almost one half (47%) of Saskatchewan residents think reducing taxes is a step in the right direction while 40% think the government should leave taxes the way they are and spend more on social programs.

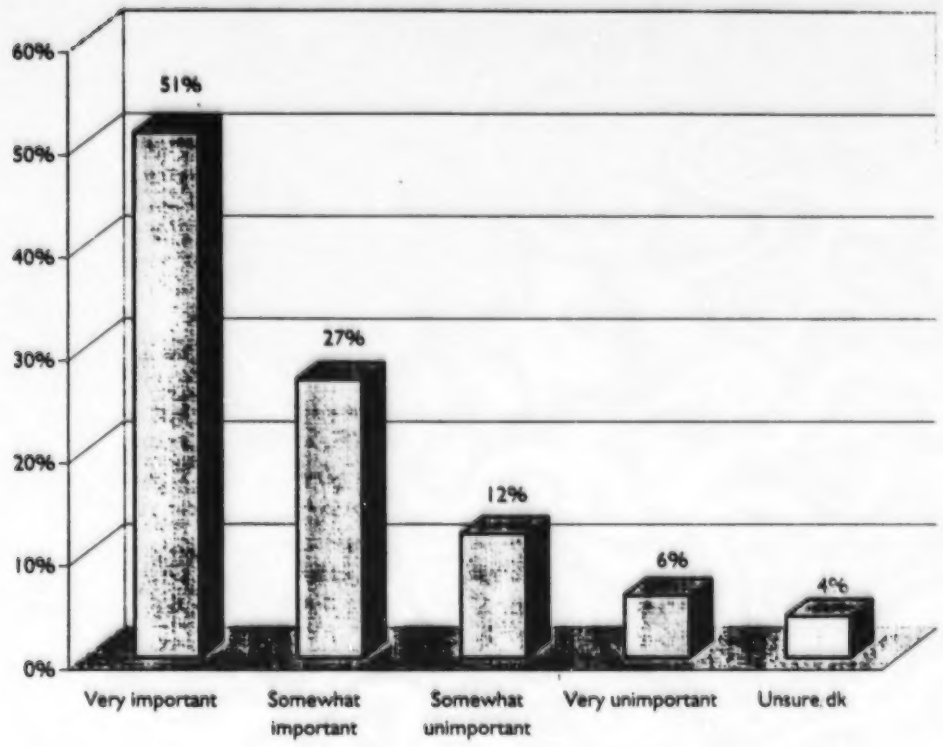
Males (58%) are more likely than females (35%) to think reducing taxes is a step in the right direction.

Respondents earning more than $50,000 a year (58%) are more likely than those earning less to think reducing taxes is a step in the right direction.

Females (47%) are more likely than males (34%) to think the provincial government should leave taxes where they are and increase social spending.

Respondents with grade 12 or less education (47%) are more likely than those with higher education to think the provincial government should leave taxes where they are.

Question 24. So would you say it's important or unimportant for Saskatchewan's income tax system to be changed in the upcoming provincial budget on March 29th?



- More than three quarters (78%) of residents think it is important for Saskatchewan's income tax system to be changed in the upcoming provincial budget. The majority (51%) think it is *very* important.

Respondents earning more than $50,000 a year (57%) are more likely than those earning less to think it is very important for Saskatchewan's income tax system be changed in the upcoming provincial budget.

Males (57%) are more likely than females (44%) to think it is very important for Saskatchewan's income tax system be changed in the upcoming provincial budget.

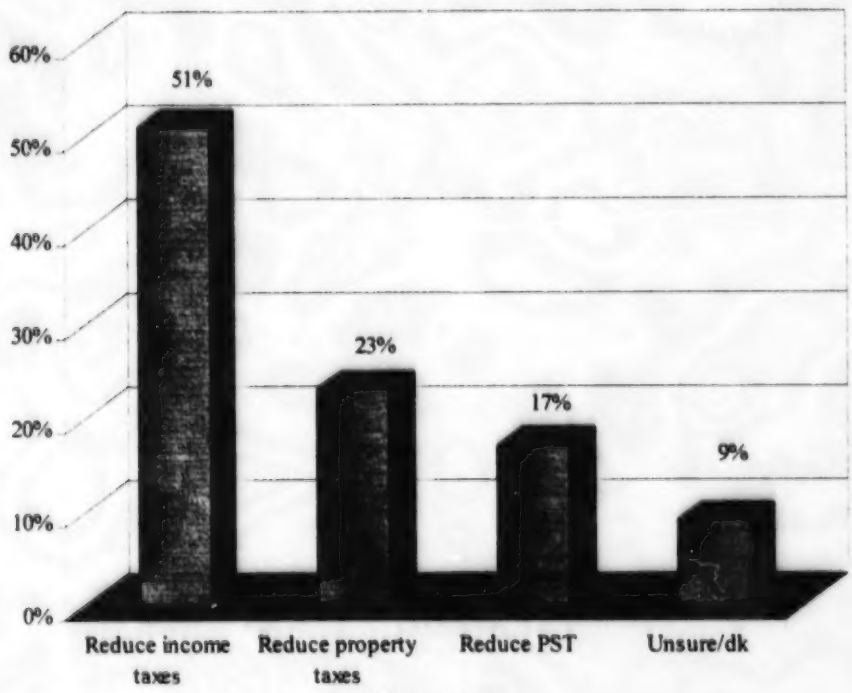
Budget-related Questions --
Withheld Prior to the Budget

October and December, 1999

6.0 TAXES

Question 11. Assuming the province could afford to pay for a moderate-sized tax cut this year, what do you think the priority should be:

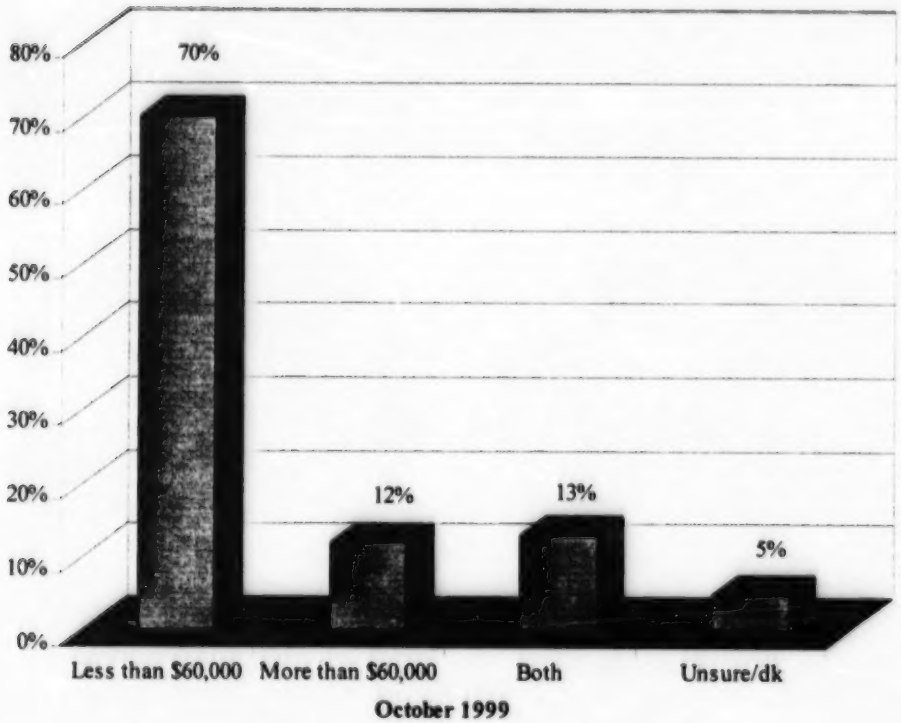
a) reducing the provincial sales tax for consumers:
b) reducing property taxes paid by farm families in financial distress; or
c) reducing income taxes.



- Assuming the province could afford to pay for a moderate-sized tax cut this year the majority (51%) of residents think the priority should be a reduction in income taxes. Approximately 23% think the priority should be a reduction in property taxes and 17% think a reduction in the provincial sales tax should be the priority.

Question 12. If income taxes were to be reduced what do you think the priority should be:

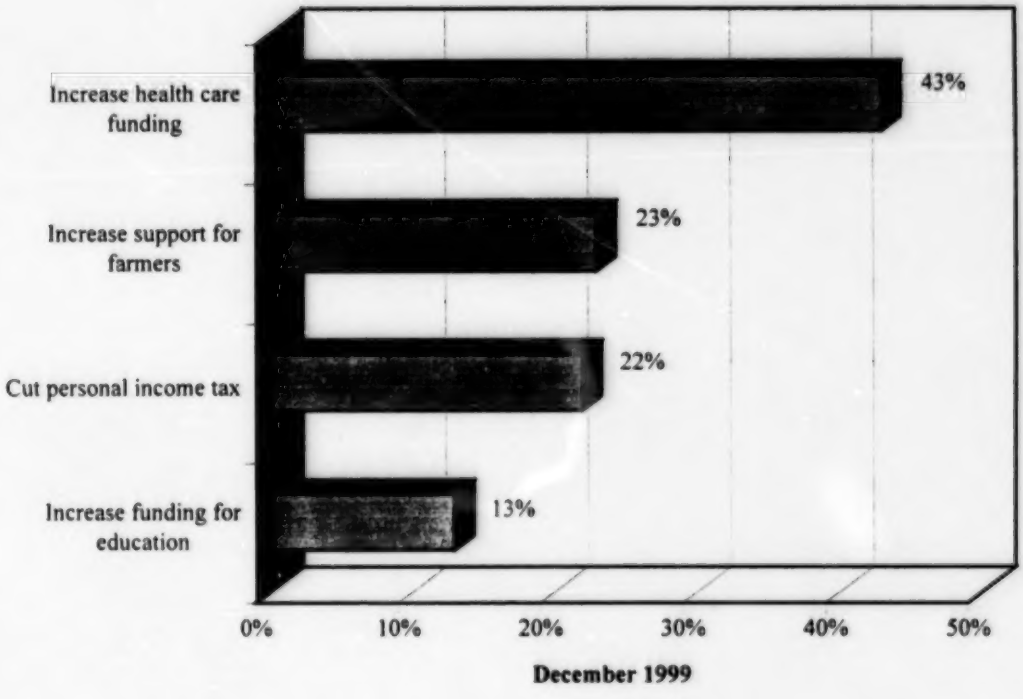
a) reducing income taxes paid by low and middle-income families earning less than $60,000 to help them make ends meet;
b) reducing income taxes paid by high-income earners making more than $60,000 so that our tax system is competitive and can attract the best talent; or
c) both.



- More than two thirds (70%) think the priority for income tax reduction should be reducing income taxes paid by low and middle-income families earning less than $60,000.

3.0 ECONOMY

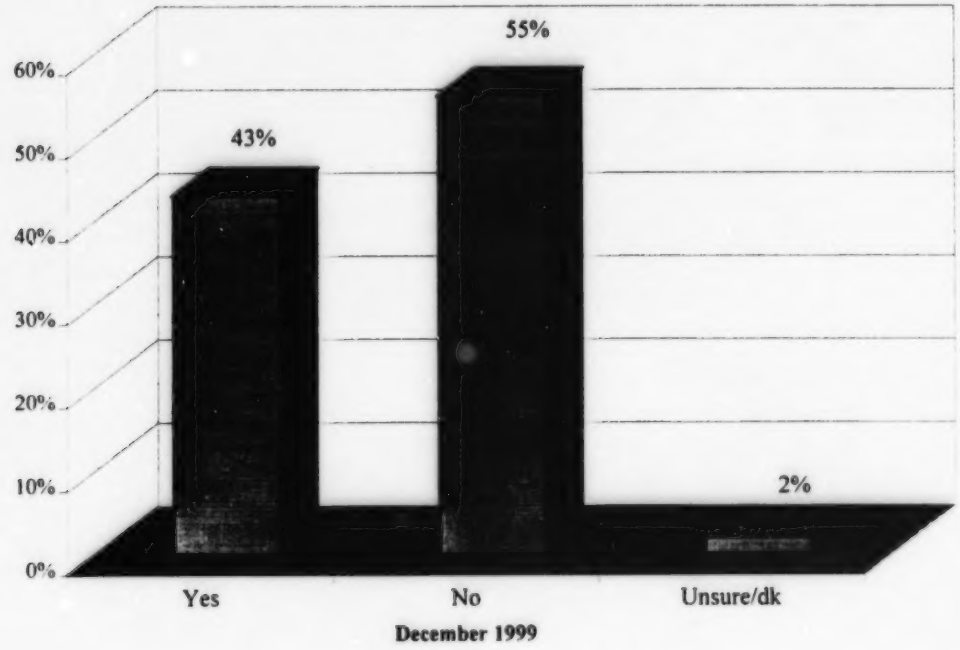
Question. What should be the Saskatchewan government's top priorities in terms of spending? Please rank the following in order of priority, 1 to 4.



- Approximately 43% of residents think health care funding should be top priority in terms of spending. Another 23% think increased support for farmers, 22% think a reduction in personal income taxes, and 13% of residents think an increase in funding for education should be the provincial government's top priority in terms of spending.

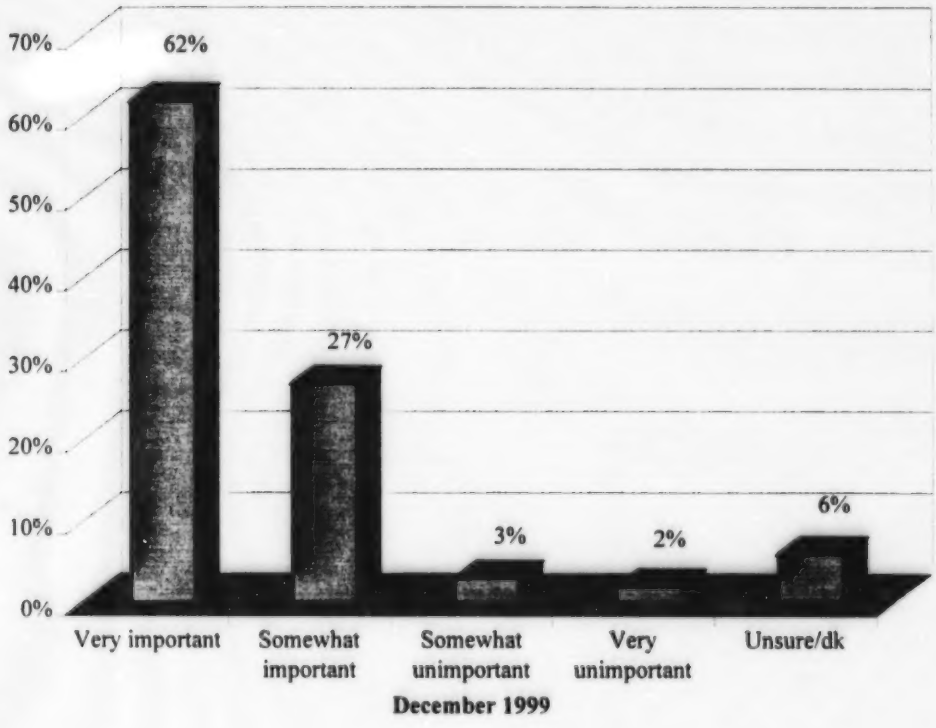
6.0 TAXES

Question 15. Are you aware that the Personal Income Tax Review Committee has submitted a report to the Minister of Finance recommending a major re-design of Saskatchewan's personal tax system?



- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (55%) are not aware that the Personal Income Tax Review Committee has submitted a report to the Minister of Finance recommending a major re-design of Saskatchewan's personal tax system; approximately 43% are aware.

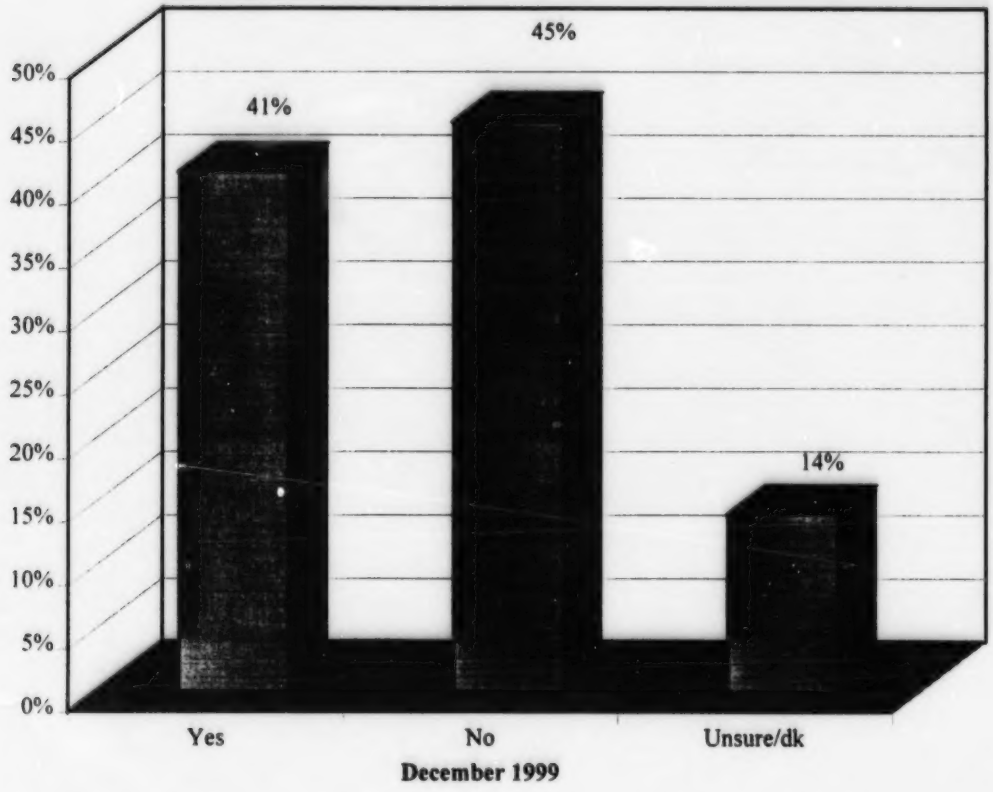
Question 16. How important is it that Saskatchewan's income tax system be changed?



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (89%) think it is important that Saskatchewan's income tax system be changed.

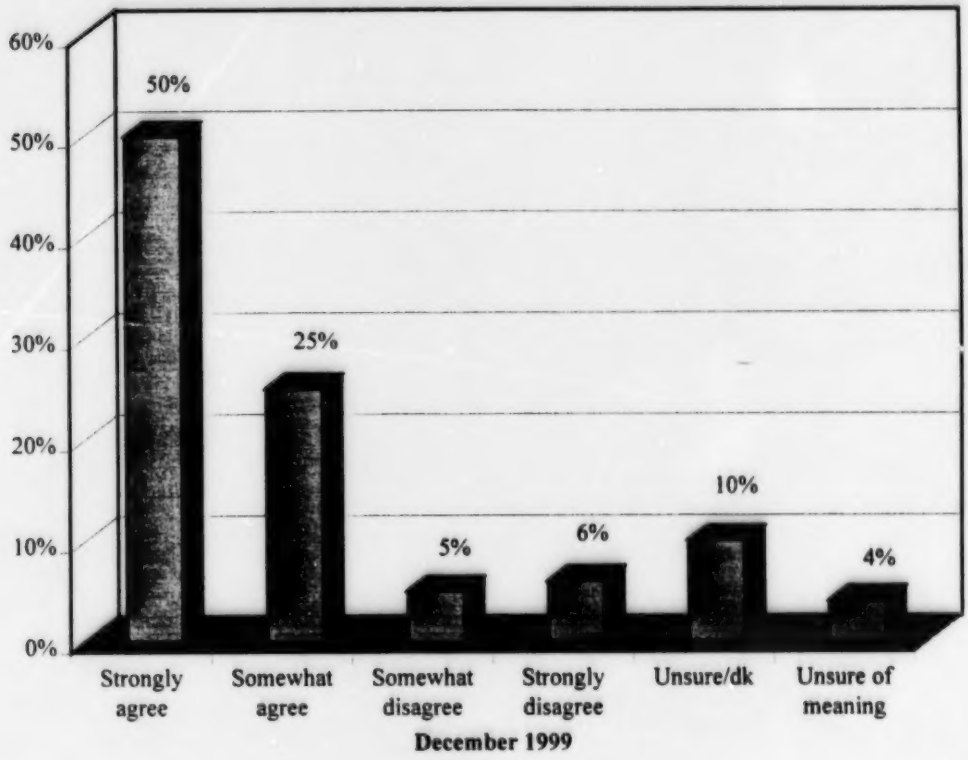
The Committee recommends lowering personal income taxes by $430 million over four years, and lowering the provincial sales tax (education and health tax) from the current 6% to 5% but applying the tax to more goods and services. This would increase sales tax revenue by an estimated $187 million.

Question 17. Generally speaking, are you prepared to pay provincial sales tax on more goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced?



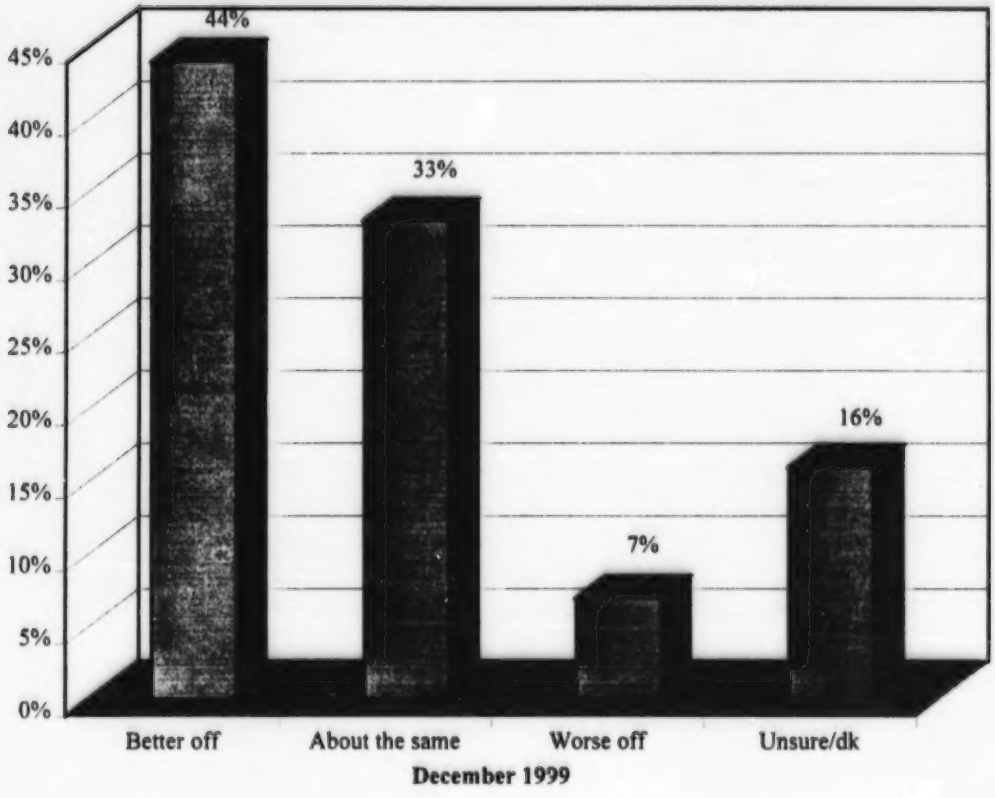
- Over one third of residents (41%) indicate they are prepared to pay provincial sales tax on more goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced.

Question 18. The Committee recommends that capital gains in Saskatchewan be taxed at a reduced rate, bringing Saskatchewan in line with Alberta. Do you agree with this recommendation?



- About three quarters of residents (75%) agree with the recommendation of taxing capital gains in Saskatchewan at a reduced rate in order to bring the province in line with Alberta; one half (50%) *strongly* agree with this recommendation.

Question 19. Do you believe your family would be better off, worse off or about the same if the government were to implement all the Committee's recommendations?



- Almost one half of residents (44%) think their family would be better off if the government were to implement all the Committee's recommendations.